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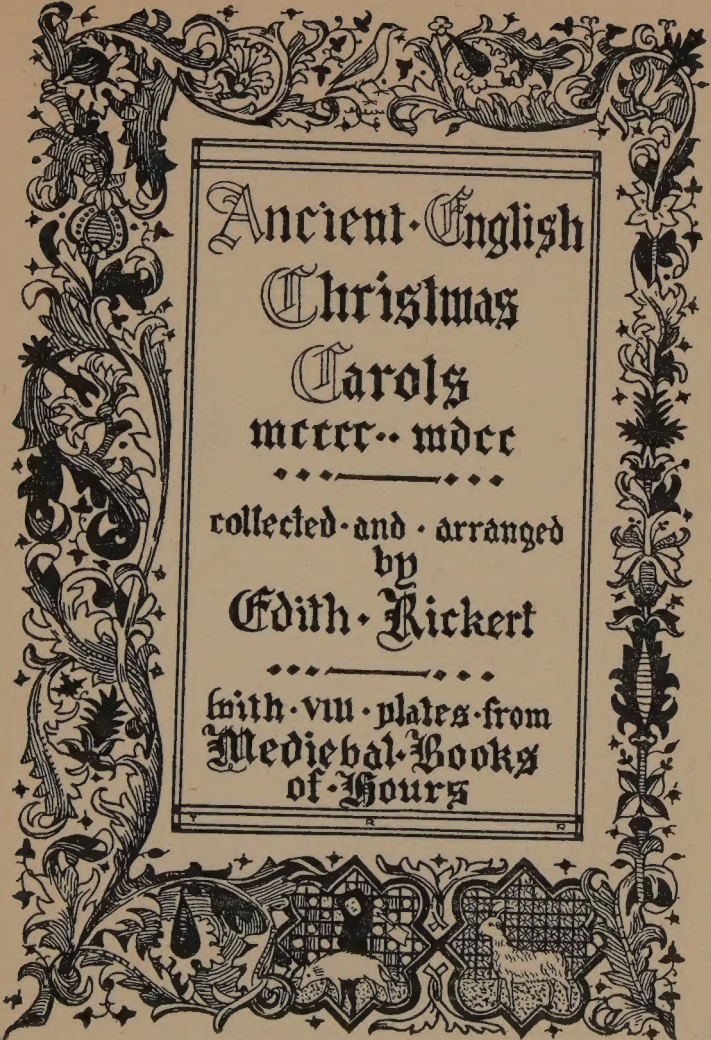












Ancient · English  
Christmas  
Carols  
mccc · mdcc

collected · and · arranged  
by  
Edith · Rickert

with · vii · plates · from  
Medieval · Books  
of · Hours









*Ecce Ancilla Domini*



ANCIENT ENGLISH  
CHRISTMAS CAROLS  
MCCCC TO MDCC  
COLLECTED & ARRANGED  
BY EDITH RICKERT

LONDON : CHATTO & WINDUS  
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1928

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TO  
*E.Q.R. and F.E.R.*

MY SISTERS

FOR WHOSE UNWEARIED ASSISTANCE  
IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS LITTLE VOLUME

I AM DEEPLY GRATEFUL



*The poems which appear on pages 3, 160, and 168  
were printed for the first time by Messrs. Chambers  
and Sidgwick in "Early English Lyrics," now issued  
by Messrs. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd.*

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## INTRODUCTION

### ANTIQUITY OF CAROL SINGING

“ I pray you, sirs, both more and less,  
Sing these carols in Christëmas.”

So wrote John Awdlay, the blind and deaf chaplain of Haughmond Abbey in Shropshire, about the year 1426, showing that by this time the custom was well established in England. But indeed praise of “ Dan Noël ” can be traced back at least two centuries earlier. There is an Anglo-Norman carol, which was perhaps sung in the days of King John, in which Noël, after enjoining upon every man to keep open house and to furnish his neighbour drink “ until he nods his head and sleeps by day,” concludes with the old Saxon exchange of healths “ Wesseyl ” and “ Drinc-heyL.”<sup>1</sup>

This carol then suggests the probability that there were Yule songs, at least of the wassail type, among the Anglo-Saxons ; and it is almost certain that customs originally pagan, such as the procession of the boar’s head and the holly and ivy contests, would have been accompanied by some kind of song-dance.

<sup>1</sup> The carol is printed on p. 132.

## THE WORD CAROL

The word *carol*, whatever its origin,<sup>1</sup> is clearly associated at first with the idea of choric song. In French it is used regularly, as early as the beginning of the twelfth century, to describe the song-dance of spring and love that was in itself still almost a rite at that time.<sup>2</sup> In England the French word *carole* had been taken over before the beginning of the fourteenth century, and at first was used commonly in the secular sense; but by some freak in philology it came later to be applied almost entirely to Christmas songs, alike to those of a sacred character, such as in French have always been called *noëls*,<sup>3</sup> and to songs of revelry. Even as late as the seventeenth century, however, we find traces of its primitive significance, as in the title: *Clod's Carol, or a Proper New Fig*. But at the same period another title, *A Mournful Carol, or an Elegy, &c.*, shows how loosely the term was used.

## ORIGIN OF SACRED CAROLS

The history of carol singing is one phase of the struggle of the Church with the pagan instincts in man. Undoubtedly the feast of Yule<sup>4</sup>—the turn of the year at the winter

<sup>1</sup> French *carole*, according to Diez from Romance *corolar* or *coreiar* = *choreas ducere*; Jeanroy, from Greek *choraulein* = *to accompany with a flute*; Faidit, Latin *corolla* = *little ring*.

<sup>2</sup> *Aucassin and Nicolette* (§ 33, 1, 7), for example.

<sup>3</sup> From Latin *nātālem* = *birthday*.

<sup>4</sup> The origin of the word *Yule* is uncertain. It has been derived from various roots, including the Germanic *jehwela* = Latin *ioculus* = *mirth*; or the Germanic *jeula* = *snow-storm*.

solstice<sup>1</sup>—is of immemorial antiquity ; and it was celebrated with a blending of riot and sacrifice to tribal divinities, such as is still found among barbaric races. Very early the Church issued a series of repressive decrees which indicate somewhat the character of the revels. In 408, stage plays were forbidden on the Lord's Day and other solemn festivals ; in 425, on the Nativity and other Church feasts ; in 578, disguisings were condemned on these occasions ; in 614, " filthy plays " were prohibited on the Kalends of January.

With the era of St. Augustine, in England, came the policy of substitution in place of prohibition, and so gradually the theory was evolved : if the people must have plays for Christmas, let them be plays of divine mystery and miracle ; if they must have songs, let them sing music of the Church.

How far this theory became explicit I do not know ; it was certainly acted upon. The drama grew up within the Church, outgrew its bounds, and by a curious sort of compromise, when it reached the streets and market-places, took on much of the secular character that centuries before had led to decrees against it. Similarly, the carols that developed out of the Latin festival hymns, after they had grown somewhat away from their models, were presently found in the same manuscripts with songs of purely pagan origin.

The relationship of the early carols to the Latin hymns is unmistakable. They are at first macaronic, like the thirteenth century *Mater Salutaris*,<sup>2</sup> the Latin element

<sup>1</sup> In the *Saxon Chronicle*, as late as 1154, Christmas is called " mid-wintermas."

<sup>2</sup> P. 3.



being gradually reduced to a refrain and at last disappearing. The Latin phrases, which recur frequently, are all common in medieval hymnology. The verse is very often at first modelled upon the form of the hymns, in lines of four and three beats alternately. The sentiments of the early carols differ scarcely at all from those of the hymns. In all probability both were written by clerics, the carols representing an attempt, whether formulated or not, to bring the meaning of Christmas nearer home to the people.

It is to be noted that most of the great carol manuscripts belong to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; indeed, they may almost be said to be included between the reigns of Henry VI. and Henry VIII. There are, however, grounds for believing that some of the poems themselves go back to the days of Henry IV. and Richard II., possibly even of Edward III. This date would seem to show that carol writing was a part of the great fourteenth-century movement of the middle classes in England, of the stir towards democracy, of the conquest of the people's English over the Latin of the clergy, over the French of the court.

In this connection it is interesting to point out certain coincidences in theme and treatment which suggest that the carols and the mystery plays are but two phases of the same tendency towards the popularisation of religion. Not only were carols sung on the stage, as in the *Second Shepherds' Play* (Towneley Plays) and the *Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors* (Coventry Plays), but the carols as a class are strongly dramatic, especially the Annunciation and Shepherd Carols

and the lullabies; the last two groups indeed, in their realistic details and homely treatment, are strongly suggestive of scenes in the religious drama, to which they may owe their inspiration.

### PRE-REFORMATION CAROLS

These are found almost entirely as collections, in less than a dozen great manuscripts which represent alike the taste of the court, the clergy, and the citizens. While the practice of carol-making undoubtedly arose among clerics, it soon spread widely among all classes of people, as is shown by the range of themes and treatment. Even the kings of this period fostered music: Henry VI. had a court musician famous over Europe, John Dunstable, who wrote carols;<sup>1</sup> Edward IV. was a great lover of pageantry; Henry VII. was a patron of musicians, and Henry VIII. himself was versed in song-making<sup>2</sup> and had a chapel full of composers, some of whom at least were probably their own poets.

Some day we may be able to identify to a much larger extent than at present the work of these court singers. Although names are often attached to the songs, we cannot be certain whether the attribution is for the words as well as for the music. When in 1504 William Cornish was paid for "setting of" a carol at Christmas, it would seem that

<sup>1</sup> A fine manuscript in Trinity College, Cambridge (o.3. 58) is believed to contain thirteen carols of his composition. It was published by Fuller-Maitland and Rockstro, under the title *English Carols of the Fifteenth Century*, 1891.

<sup>2</sup> MS. 31,922 in the British Museum, which contains various compositions by Henry VIII., has his name on the flyleaf, and is believed to have belonged to him.

he furnished the music only, although he is known to have been something of a writer. When two names are attached to one short lyric, as often happens in the case of Richard Smart (Smert) and John Truelove (Trouluffe), we know that they collaborated but cannot tell the share of each. And again, while we have a long list of names of composers<sup>1</sup> during the early part of the reign of Henry VIII., we can never be sure, in an age when authorship was rarely looked upon as a private right, how often the work is original and how often merely the setting, or possibly the adaptation of an old song, to music. For example, John Gwynneth, who is given credit for the Easter carol beginning, "And I mankind," was evidently adapting an old love-song, the refrain of which, "My love that mourneth for me," he retained. On the other hand, the composer Pygott, whose name is signed to the highly original song, "Quid petis, O Fili?"<sup>2</sup> in all probability wrote the words as well. The author of so unusual a poem, even in those days, would scarcely have been overlooked.

Aside from the court carols there are many of a more strictly ecclesiastical stamp, showing all degrees of poetic ability. They agree in a general tendency to interpret the great event in its relation to the soul of man; hence they often include a brief outline of the life of Christ and the Crucifixion. Some few are strongly mystical in character. The best are rather elaborate in structure and artificial in

<sup>1</sup> William and John Cornish, Banister, Sturges, Newark, Davy, Sheringham, Fairfax, Mower, Peter, Hawte, Pakke, and others.

<sup>2</sup> P. 63.

treatment, even extravagant, as, for example, "A blessed bird, as I you say."<sup>1</sup> The worst carols of this class are scarcely distinguishable from those of popular origin.

The usual mark of the carol made among the people and sung by them is its recurrence in several slightly different versions. Sometimes stanzas are added or omitted or displaced; sometimes the sense is confused by forgetfulness or misunderstanding or mishearing; sometimes whole lines or groups of lines are lost except their rhyme-schemes, which are then filled out, either to the same general purport, or with quite a different meaning.

All these changes are due to oral transmission extending over a considerable period of time. It is probable that some of the carols were gradually altered out of all resemblance to their original form; for instance, "Joseph was an Old Man," which in its present state cannot be older than the seventeenth century, is based upon a legend that was familiar in the fourteenth, and in the fifteenth was sung in a carol very similar in substance but totally different in structure and wording from the later version.<sup>2</sup> Again, the story of the eighteenth-century "Cherry-Tree Carol,"<sup>3</sup> is to be found in a fifteenth-century mystery play; while the fifteenth-century "The Falcon hath Borne my Make Away" has survived until to-day in a form singularly altered but quite recognisable.<sup>4</sup>

In content these popular carols are for the most part

<sup>1</sup> P. 186. It is perhaps better classified as an Easter carol.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. pp. 24-25, below.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. p. 88, and note on p. 153.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. pp. 193, 194.

religious ; but they are more concerned with the story of the Nativity than with any subtleties of interpretation. Comparatively few of a secular type were written or have survived. These have to do with the immemorial customs of the revels in the hall, and include further a few wassail and drinking songs. Sometimes even in these the religious element was dragged in in a curious fashion, as when the boar was used as a symbol for Christ, or "Bring us in Good Ale," was sung to the tune of an Annunciation carol.

#### POST-REFORMATION CAROLS

The Reformation removed several of the chief sources of inspiration of the older carol-writers. It was no longer possible to sing "Regina celi, letare," or to turn rapturous love-songs, such as "Who shall have my Fair Lady?" or "True Love, you do me Right," to worship of the Virgin ; or to glorify the Divine Motherhood with lullabies, unless these were understood to be spiritual Balulalows. There could be no more carols for saints' days, and even the Nativity itself had to be viewed less from a dramatic standpoint and more as a scheme of salvation. The religious elements were, so to speak, strained out from the popular accretions with which they had been mingled, consequently reduced as well as purified.

On the other hand, more stress than ever was laid on the old customs of Christmas mirth, and carols on this theme become increasingly numerous during the seventeenth century. Ben Jonson in "Christmas his Masque," presented at court in 1616, introduces a thoroughly secular "Carol,

in a long tawny coat, with a red cap and a flute at his girdle, his torch-bearer carrying a song-book open; and Wassail, like a neat sempster and songster, her page bearing a brown bowl dressed with ribands and rosemary before her." Again, Nicholas Breton in his *Fantasticks* in 1626 gives a picture of Christmas revels in which the Christian element has become pretty well an appendix: "It is now Christmas, and not a cup of drink must pass without a carol; the beasts, fowl and fish come to a general execution, and the corn is ground to dust for the bakehouse and the pastry; cards and dice purge many a purse, and the youth show their agility in shoeing of the wild mare; now good cheer and welcome, and God be with you—and against the New Year provide for the presents—the Lord of Misrule is no mean man for his time, and the guests of the high table must lack no wine; the lusty bloods must look about them like men, and piping and dancing puts away much melancholy, stolen venison is sweet, and a fat coney is worth money, pitfalls are now set for small birds, and a woodcock hangs himself in a gin, a good fire heats all the house, and a full alms-basket makes the beggar's prayers: the maskers and the mummers make the merry sport, but if they lose their money their drum goes dead; swearers and swaggerers are sent away to the alehouse, and unruly wenches go in danger of judgment; musicians now make their instruments speak out, and a good song is worth the hearing. In sum, it is holy time, a duty in Christians in remembrance of Christ and customs among friends for the maintenance of good fellowship. In brief, I thus conclude it: I hold it a memory of the Heaven's love



and the world's peace, the mirth of the honest, and the meeting of the friendly. Farewell."

This is the aspect of Christmas voiced chiefly in the popular carols of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; it finds expression also in the work of the poets Herrick and Wither, and continues until the gradual spread of Puritanism left Christmas stripped and shorn of its old customs, consequently of the songs in which these were perpetuated.

As the stream of religion by the Reformation was turned into half-a-dozen channels, so Christmas lyrics came to be a personal matter in which each writer expressed his own attitude and experience. The earlier Calvinists were represented by Coverdale and the Wedderburns; the Roman Catholics by Southwell and Crashaw; the orthodox Churchmen by Bishop Hall, Giles Fletcher, Herbert, and Jeremy Taylor, and from the lay point of view, by Ben Jonson, Drummond of Hawthornden, Francis Quarles, and others.

It is interesting to note that the story of the shepherds, doubtless because of the fashion for pastorals at that time, was the aspect of the Nativity most often treated.

These compositions of Elizabethan and early Stuart days include very few real carols. Sometimes they keep so rigidly within the bounds of ecclesiastical matter that they are hymns. More often they are so elaborate in form and metaphysical in tone that they could never have been intended to be sung.

There is no doubt that Puritanism is to blame for the extinction of the practice of carol-singing, both in that it discouraged the excesses of Christmas revelry and in that it

made but scant use of music as a means of religious experience. I doubt whether any good carols, either religious or secular, originated between the end of the seventeenth century and the middle of the nineteenth.

The eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, it is true, were the great days of broadsheet publication, in which much old traditional matter was preserved, but the new carols produced during this period are scarcely worth preservation.

Within the last fifty years various attempts have been made to write carols in the medieval manner; and as deliberate imitations of old forms from which the living inspiration has nearly vanished, some of these are very good.

#### PRINTED COLLECTIONS OF CAROLS

The oldest known printed carols consist of two leaves of a collection issued by Wynkyn de Worde in 1521. The title *New Christmas Carols* suggests that earlier editions had preceded this. A unique little black song-book in the British Museum, dated 1530,<sup>1</sup> contains several carols; while another set of *Christmas Carols, Newly Imprinted*, issued by Richard Kele, between 1546 and 1552, now known only by extracts in Bliss's *Bibliographical Miscellanies* in 1813, is the source of several others. During the second half of the sixteenth century many other collections were made, since lost and known only by name. The Wedderburns' *Compendious Book of Godly Songs and Ballads*, in several editions, of which the first is as old as 1567, perhaps older, and several books by the musician, William Byrd, contain a few carols.

<sup>1</sup> Catalogued as *Bassus*, K. i.e. 1.

From the seventeenth century (1642, 1661, 1682 and undated) there are several collections of popular carols; and others were printed from time to time in *Poor Robin's Almanac*.

But the oldest carols continued to exist in manuscript until Ritson,<sup>1</sup> Wright,<sup>2</sup> and Sandys<sup>3</sup> did pioneer work in printing and collecting them, the process being continued by Fehr,<sup>4</sup> Flügel,<sup>5</sup> Bullen,<sup>6</sup> Chambers and Sidgwick,<sup>7</sup> and Dyboski<sup>8</sup>; and from a musical standpoint first by J. Stafford Smith,<sup>9</sup> afterwards by Nicholson and Stainer,<sup>10</sup> and Fuller-Maitland and Rockstro.<sup>11</sup> I have mentioned only the most important works, fuller bibliographies being given in the volume of Chambers and Sidgwick, and in the *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. ii. Information in regard to the manuscripts, published and unpublished, is to be found in Hughes Hughes' *Catalogue of Early English Music* (Sacred).

#### PLAN OF THE PRESENT EDITION

In the present edition I have attempted to classify the carols according to their subject-matter; and within the various groups to arrange them, as far as may be, chrono-

<sup>1</sup> *Ancient Songs and Ballads*, 1790; ed. Hazlitt, 1877.

<sup>2</sup> Percy Society publications, vols. iv. and lxxiii.; Warton Club, vol. iv.

<sup>3</sup> Percy Society publications, vol. iv.; *Christmas Carols*, 1833; *Christmastide*, 1852.

<sup>4</sup> *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen*, cvii., cix.

<sup>5</sup> *Anglia*, xii., xxvi.; *Neuenglisches Lesebuch*, 1895.

<sup>6</sup> *A Christmas Garland*, 1885.

<sup>7</sup> *Early English Lyrics*, 1907.

<sup>8</sup> Early English Text Society, Extra Series, CI.

<sup>9</sup> *Old English Songs*, 1780.

<sup>10</sup> *Early Bodleian Music*.

<sup>11</sup> *English Carols of the Fifteenth Century*, 1891.

logically, except where it seemed advisable to show some special relationship. To the left of each carol I have put the date of its first appearance in manuscript or in print, or, failing that, the nearest approximation possible to the date of the oldest manuscript, or the time when the author flourished.

While the collection is far from complete, owing to limitations of space, I have endeavoured to include (1) all the best, and (2) all the most characteristic and representative specimens of this form of writing. The second group necessarily contains some of inferior poetic quality.

My original plan was to allow equal space to sacred carols and to secular; but the former so greatly outnumber the latter as to run into nearly half of the second part. Accordingly I have divided the sacred carols into two groups:—

I. Carols of the Nativity.

II. Carols of the Divine Mystery.

The distinction, which is perhaps not very well expressed by the titles, is between the carols which emphasize the Nativity as an historical and dramatic event, and those that dwell upon the meaning of the Incarnation. The two groups approach each other so that there might be difference of opinion as to how a few carols should be classified; but as it was necessary to make some sort of division, and a great many carols show a strong theological element, this arrangement seemed to be the most satisfactory.

The Nativity Carols are subdivided into seven groups:—

I. Carols of the Virgin: *Virgo Rosa Virginum.*

II. Carols of the Annunciation: *Ecce Ancilla Domini.*

III. Carols of the Nativity: *In Die Nativitatis.*

IV. Carols of the Childhood of Jesus : *O Jesu Parvule.*

V. Carols of the Shepherds : *Gloria in Excelsis Deo.*

VI. Carols of the Three Kings : *Reges de Saba Venient.*

VII. Carols of the Christmas Saints : *Nunc Gaudet Ecclesia.*

I have added also in Appendix I. a few examples of Latin Christmas hymns and of Anglo-Norman and French carols ; and in Appendix II., specimens of carols not related in subject-matter to Christmas.

In dealing with the individual texts, I have tried to preserve as far as possible the effect of the original ; and to this end have allowed quaint, obsolete, and even ungrammatical expressions to stand, when they did not obscure the meaning, or could easily be explained in a footnote. With the metre I have tampered as little as possible, wishing to show the range of skill in different authors from barbaric roughness to exquisite melody.

In the case of French and Latin phrases I have retained the old forms, correcting obvious errors. They afford no difficulty to readers of these languages, and heighten the quaintness of the effect. A glossary, however, of these phrases is given at the end of Part III. My original plan of translating these in the footnotes was abandoned because of the numerous repetitions of familiar Church phrases.

A special difficulty arose in the case of carols that exist in several versions. As exact texts were out of the question here, both because of the exigencies of translation, and because their establishment would have required constant return from the printed editions to the manuscripts, and

frequent repetitions of parallel versions, the best plan seemed to be to use the different forms of one poem to elucidate a corrupt or an obscure passage, and otherwise to choose what seemed the most interesting text and give only important variants in the footnotes. Sometimes choice was almost impossible among several versions identical in thought and differing only in a multitude of details.

Carols of the Divine Mystery are subdivided into the very large group in which the event of the Nativity is subordinated to the meaning of the Incarnation, *Mirabile Misterium*, and into a small group, *In Dulci Iubilo*, in which the spiritual joy of Christmas is sung, as over against the riotous mirth handed down as customary from the days of pagan Yule.

In Part III. I have included Carols of Yuletide Festivity, subdividing them into four groups that represent four aspects of Christmas celebrations :

I. Carols of Welcome and Christmas Cheer : *Proface*.

II. Carols of Health-drinking : *Wassail*.

III. Carols of the Boar's Head : *Caput Apri Defero*.

IV. Carols of Holly and Ivy : *Veni Coronaberis*.

Appendix I. contains Christmas poems of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which can scarcely be called carols ; and Appendix II., a few modern carols in imitation of the medieval manner.

#### LITERARY VALUE OF THE CAROLS

In literary value the carols range from gems of religious inspiration to joggling tavern ditties. In some subjects they are over-bound to the Biblical material ; in others they



show vivid imagination and tender feeling. As a class the lullabies are the most beautiful, being as exquisite in form as in essence; and next to these, perhaps, come the carols of Mary. Out of something like two hundred anonymous carols there are very few that lack some beauty or quaintness or charm; and there are perhaps twenty or more that may be counted among those best songs that spring perfect out of the hearts of men.

PART I  
CAROLS OF THE NATIVITY



# VIRGO ROSA VIRGINUM<sup>1</sup>

## *Mater Salutaris*

Thirteenth Century.

SAINT Mary, mother mild,  
*Mater salutaris,*  
Fairest flower of any field,  
*Vere nuncuparis,*  
Through Jesu Christ thou wert with child,  
Thou bring me of my thoughtēs wild,  
*Potente,*  
That maketh me to death [to] go  
*Repente.*  
My thought is wild as is the roe,  
*Luto gratulante,*  
She worketh me full muchel woe,  
*Illaque favente ;*  
But if He willē wend me fro  
I ween my heart breaketh a-two,  
*Fervore ;*  
I tamēd<sup>2</sup> am both day and night,  
*Dolore.*  
Jesu, through Thy muchel might  
*Omnia fecisti.*

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> *Text*: am ifaiht.

## CAROLS OF THE NATIVITY

The Holy Ghost in Mary light

*Sicut voluisti,*

Therefore He is yclept our Driht;<sup>1</sup>

Jesu, bring my thought to Christ

*Constanter,*

That it be stable and not changeable,

*Fraudenter.*

Jesu Christ, Thou art on loft,<sup>2</sup>

*Digno Tu scandente,*

Heaven and earth Thou havest ywrought,

*Victore triumphante,*

Mankind with Thy body a-bought,

Thou wouldst not him have lost for nought,

*Nec dare;*

And gave the blood that was so good,

*Tam gnare.*

Sweetë lady, flower of all,

*Vere consolatrix,*

Thou be mine help that I ne<sup>3</sup> fall,

*Cunctis reparatrix.*

Mildest queen and best ycorn,<sup>4</sup>

Night and day thou be me for<sup>5</sup>

*Precantis.*

Give me grace to see thy face,

*Infantis,*

That I through thy sweetë bene,<sup>6</sup>

*Tutrix orphanorum,*

May leavë all this worldës teen,<sup>7</sup>

*Solamen miserorum.*

And to thee, Lady, may I take

<sup>1</sup> Lord.

<sup>4</sup> Chosen.

<sup>2</sup> On high.

<sup>5</sup> Be for me.

<sup>7</sup> Trouble.

<sup>3</sup> Not.

<sup>6</sup> Prayer.

And my sins [may] all forsake,  
*Volente,*  
 That I ne missë of thy bliss,  
*Poscente.*

*Enixa est Puerpera*

1425-50.

A LADY that was so fair and bright,  
*Velut maris stella,*  
 Brought forth Jesu full of might,  
*Parens et puella.*

Lady, flower of allë thing,  
*Rosa sine spina,*  
 That barest Jesu, Heaven-King,  
*Gracia Divina.*

All this worldë was forlore,  
*Eva peccatrice,*  
 Till that Jesu was ybore,  
*De te, genetrice.*

Of all women thou art best,  
*Felix fecundata,*  
 To all weary thou art rest,  
*Mater honorata.*

Well I wot He is thy Son,  
*Ventre quem portasti ;*  
 There will He grant thee thy boon,  
*Infans quem lactasti.*



How sweet He is, how meek He is  
*Nullus memoravit;*  
 In heaven He is and heaven[ly] bliss  
*Nobis preparavit.*

Of all women thou bearest the prize,  
*Mater gratiosa,*  
 Grant us allë Paradise,  
*Virgo gloriosa.*

*As Dew in April*

Fifteenth Century.

I SING of a maiden  
 That is makeless ;<sup>1</sup>  
 King of all kings  
 To her Son she ches.<sup>2</sup>  
 He came all so still  
 Where His mother was,  
 As dew in April  
 That falleth on the grass.  
 He came all so still  
 To His mother's bower,  
 As dew in April  
 That falleth on the flower.  
 He came all so still  
 Where His mother lay,  
 As dew in April  
 That falleth on the spray.  
 Mother and maiden  
 Was never none but she ;  
 Well may such a lady  
 Godës mother be.

<sup>1</sup> Matchless.

<sup>2</sup> Chose.

*M and A and R and I*<sup>1</sup>

Fifteenth Century.

*M and A and R and I,*  
*Singen I will a new song.*

OF these four letters purpose I,  
*M and A and R and I* ;  
 They betoken maid Mary,  
 All our joy of her sprang.

Withouten sin of her body,  
 —*M and A and R and I*—  
 Of her was born a king truly,  
 The Jews did to death with wrong.

Upon the mount of Calvary,  
 —*M and A and R and I*—  
 There they beat His bare body,  
 With scourges that were sharp and long.

Our dear Lady she stood Him by,  
 —*M and A and R and I*—  
 And wept water full bitterly ;  
 Tears of blood followed ever among.

God that sitteth above the sky,  
*With M and A and R and I,*  
 Save now all this company,  
 And send us joy and bliss among !

<sup>1</sup> See note.

*Ave Maris Stella*

Fifteenth Century.

*Ave maris stella,*  
The star on the sea,  
*Dei mater alma*  
Blessed may she be!

*Atque semper virgo,*  
Pray thy Son for me,  
*Felix celi porta,*  
That I may come to thee.

Gabriel, that archangel,  
He was messenger,  
So fair he greeted our Lady,  
With an *ave* so clear.

Hail be thou, Mary,  
Be thou, Mary,  
Full of God's grace,  
And queen of mercy!

All that are to greet  
Withouten deadly sin,  
Forty days of pardon  
God granteth him.

*There is no Rose of such Virtue*<sup>1</sup>

Fifteenth Century.

THERE is no rose of such virtue,  
As is the rose that bare Jesu,  
*Alleluia!*

<sup>1</sup> See note

For in this rose contain'd was  
 Heaven and earth in little space,  
*Res miranda!*

By that rose we may well see,  
 There be one God in Persons Three,  
*Pares forma.*

The angels sungen the shepherds to,  
*Gloria in excelsis Deo,*  
*Gaudeamus!*

Leave we all this worldly mirth,  
 And follow we this joyful birth,  
*Transeamus.*

*Of a rose, a lovely rose,<sup>1</sup>*  
*And of a rose I sing a song<sup>2</sup>*

Fifteenth Century.

HEARKEN to me, both old and ying,  
 How a rose began to spring;  
 A fairer rose to my liking  
 Sprang there never in kinges land.

Six branches are on that rose beam,  
 They be both bright and sheen;  
 The rose is called Mary, heaven's queen,  
 Of her bosom a Blossom sprang.

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> Where I have used the MS. heading, sometimes as here a couplet, as a title, it is printed without capitals.

The first branch was of great might,  
 That sprang on Christmas night.  
 The star<sup>1</sup> shone over Bethlehem bright,  
 That men might see both broad and long.

The second branch was of great honour,  
 That was sent from heaven's tower;  
 Blessed be that fair flower,  
 Break it shall the fiendēs bonds.

The third branch widē spread,  
 Where Mary lay in her bed;  
 The bright star three kingēs led  
 To Bethlehem, where that branch they found.

The fourth branch sprang into hell,  
 The fiendēs boast for to fell,  
 There might no soulē therein dwell,  
 Blessed be that time that branch sprang.

The fifth branch was fair in foot,  
 It sprang to heaven, top and root,  
 There to dwell and be our bote<sup>2</sup>  
 And yet is seen in priestēs hands.

The sixth branch by and by,  
 It is the five joys of mild Mary.  
 Now Christ save all this company,  
 And send us good life and long!

<sup>1</sup> MS. *strēme* = *sterne*?

Help.

*This Rose is Railed<sup>1</sup> on a Ryse<sup>2</sup>*

About 1450.

*Of a rosè singë we :  
Misterium mirabile.*

THIS rose is railëd on a ryse,  
He hath bought the Prince of price,  
And in this time sooth it is,  
*Viri sine semine.*

This rose is red of colour bright,  
Through whom our joy began alight,  
Upon a Christës mass night,  
*Claro David germine.*

Of this rose was Christ ybore,  
To save mankind that was forlore,  
And us all from sin its sore,  
*Prophetarum carmine.*

This rose, of flowers she is the flower,  
She will not fadë for no shower,  
To sinful men she sent succour,  
*Mira plenitudine.*

This rosë is so fair of hue,  
In maid Mary that is so true,  
Yborne was Lord of [all] virtue,  
*Salvator sine crimine.*

1 Set.

2 Branch.



*Hail Mary, full of grace, mother in virginity*

Fifteenth Century.

THE Holy Ghost is to thee sent  
 From the Father Omnipotent,  
 Now is God within thee went,  
 The angel said "Ave."

When the angel *ave* began,  
 Flesh and blood together ran ;  
 Mary bare both God and man,  
 Through virtue and pure dignity.

So saith the gospel of Saint John :  
 God and man is made but one,  
 In flesh and blood, body and bone,  
 One God in Persons Three.

And the Prophet Jeremy  
 Told in his prophecy  
 That the Son of Mary  
 Should die for us on the Rood-tree.

He to us much joy did grant  
 And of peace on earth no want,  
 Since the birth of this Infant  
 In the land of Galilee.

Mary grant to us thy bliss  
 Where thy Son His dwelling is ;  
 For what we have done amiss  
 Pray for grace for charity. Amen.

*Nowell, ell, ell, ell, ell, ell, ell, ell, ell, ell,  
Mary was greeted by Gabriel*

Fifteenth Century.

MARY mother, meek and mild,  
Fro shame and sin that ye us shield,  
For great on ground ye go with child,  
*Gabriele nuncio.*

Mary mother, be not adread,  
Jesu is in your body bred,  
And of your breast He will be fed,  
*Cum pudoris lilio.*

Mary mother, the fruit of thee  
For us was nailēd on a tree,  
In heaven is now His majesty,  
*Fulget Resurreccio.*

Mary mother, the thirdē day  
Up He rose, as I you say,  
To hell He took the rightē way,  
*Motu fertur proprio.*

Mary mother, after thy Son,  
Up thou styest <sup>1</sup> with him to wone; <sup>2</sup>  
The angels were glad when thou wert come,  
*In celi palacio.*

<sup>1</sup> Ascendest.

<sup>2</sup> Dwell.

*Alma Redemptoris Mater*<sup>1</sup>

Fifteenth Century.

As I lay upon a night,  
 My thought was on a bird<sup>2</sup> so bright (Alleluia !)  
 That men call Mary full of might,  
*Redemptoris Mater.*

To her came Gabriel with light,  
 And said, " Hail be thou, blissful wight (Alleluia !),  
 To be called now art thou dight<sup>3</sup>  
*Redemptoris Mater.*"

At that word that lady bright  
 Anon conceived God full of might (Alleluia !);  
 Then men wist well that she hight  
*Redemptoris Mater.*

When Jesus on the Rood was pight,<sup>4</sup>  
 Mary was doleful of that sight (Alleluia !)  
 Till she saw Him rise upright,  
*Redemptoris Mater.*

Jesu, that sittest in heaven light,  
 Grant us to come before Thy sight [Alleluia !]  
 With that bird that is so bright,  
*Redemptoris Mater.*

<sup>1</sup> See note.<sup>2</sup> Lady.<sup>3</sup> Ready.<sup>4</sup> Placed.

*Salve regina, mater misericordie*

Fifteenth Century.

O BLESSEDFUL bird, full of grace,  
To all mankind thou art solace,  
Queen of heaven in every place,  
*Salve.*

To our health thou bare a Child,  
And yet with sin wert never [de]filed,  
Mary mother, meek and mild,  
*Salve.*

From the fiend thou us defend,  
And of sin thou us amend ;  
Mary, thy mercy thou to us send,  
*Salve.*

O worthy wight, we worship thee,  
Full of mercy and of pity ;  
Wherefore we sing in each degree,  
*Salve.*

And let us not from thee fall,  
And thereto we cry and also call,  
Both young and old, great and small,  
*Salve.*

And bring us to thy Son's bliss,  
Where that thy dwelling is,  
Of that we pray thee that we not miss,  
*Salve.*

*A, a, a, a,  
Nunc gaudet Maria*

Fifteenth Century.

MARY is a lady bright,  
She hath a Son of mickle might,  
Over all this world she is light,  
*Bona natalicia.*

Mary is so fair of face,  
And her Son so full of grace,  
In heaven [may] He make us a place,  
*Cum sua potencia.*

Mary is so fair and bright,<sup>1</sup>  
And her Son so full of might,<sup>1</sup>  
Over all this world He is light,<sup>1</sup>  
*Bona voluntaria.*

Mary is both good and kind,  
Ever on us she hath mind,  
That the fiend shall us not bind<sup>2</sup>  
*Cum sua malicia.*

Mary is queen of every thing,  
And her Son a lovely king;  
God grant us all [a] good ending;  
*Regnat Dei gracia.*

<sup>1</sup> *Text*: swote—boot—boot.

<sup>2</sup> *Text*: shend=hurt.

*Novus Sol de virgine  
Reluxit nobis odie*

About 1450.

THOU holy daughter of Sion,  
Princess of Jerusalem,  
To-day sprang of thee alone  
The grain <sup>1</sup> of Jesse in Bethlehem.

This day also the bright star  
That Balaam gan so to magnify  
Arose of thee to stint <sup>2</sup> our war,  
And in darkness us to gye.<sup>3</sup>

Thou art also above each one  
A mother and a maiden true,  
And the yard eke of Aaron  
That bore this day a bourgeon new.

The orient light of Nazareth  
Thou art also, to stint <sup>2</sup> our strife,  
That broughtest forth against death  
This day the soothfast Man of Life.

Thou art eke the fleece of Gideon  
Ydewöd with the Holy Ghost,  
The chaste temple of Solomon,  
Clear as crystal in every coast.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Seed.

<sup>2</sup> Stop.

<sup>3</sup> Guide.

<sup>4</sup> Side.

Thou art eke the joy of Israel,  
 To stint all our oldē sorrow,  
 The gate the which Ezekiel  
 Saw always closed, both eve and morrow.

And thou art eke the purple rose  
 That whilom grew in Jericho;  
 The Father's wisdom to enclose  
 Thou were the temple and tower also.

*Singē we, singē we,  
 Regina celi, letare*

Fifteenth Century.

Holy maiden, blessed thou be,  
 Godēs Son is born of thee;  
 The Father of heaven worship we,  
*Regina celi, letare.*

Hail, wife! Hail, maiden! Hail, bright of blee!<sup>1</sup>  
 Hail, daughter! Hail, mater! Hail, full of pity!  
 Hail, chosen to the Persons Three!  
*Regina celi, letare.*

Thou art empress of heaven so free,  
 Worthy maiden in majesty;  
 Now worship we the Trinity,  
*Regina celi, letare.*

Lady so lovely, so goodly to see,  
 So buxom<sup>2</sup> in thy body to be,  
 Thou art His mother for humility,  
*Regina celi, letare.*

<sup>1</sup> Face.

<sup>2</sup> Obedient.



These been courteous kings of solemnity,<sup>1</sup>  
 They worshipped thy Son with humility ;  
 Mildē Mary, thus redē<sup>2</sup> we,  
*Regina celi, letare.*

So gracious, so precious in royalty,  
 Thus gentle, thus good, thus findē we  
 There is none such in no country,  
*Regina celi, letare.*

And therefore kneel we down on our knee,  
 This blessed birth worship we ;  
 This is a song of humility,  
*Regina celi, letare.*

*Sing we to this merry company,  
 Regina celi, letare*

Before 1529.<sup>3</sup>

O QUEEN of heaven, thou sittest in thy see,<sup>4</sup>  
 O comfort of all captivity,  
 Right causeth us all to sing to thee,  
*Regina celi, letare.*

O blessed branch of humility,  
 O causer of all felicity,  
 With joy and gladness sing we to thee,  
*Regina celi, letare.*

<sup>1</sup> *Text*: solunte.

<sup>3</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> Counsel.

<sup>4</sup> Domain.

## CAROLS OF THE NATIVITY

Benign lady, blessed may thou be,  
 That barest God in virginity;  
 Therefore sing we unto thee,  
*Regina celi, letare.*

*A song upon, Now must I sing, &c.*<sup>1</sup>  
 Fifteenth Century.

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, sing we with mirth,  
 Christ is come well, with us to dwell,  
 By His most noble birth.*

UNDER a tree, in sporting me  
 Alone by a wood-side,  
 I heard a maid that sweetly said,  
 "I am with child this tide."

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, sing we with mirth,  
 Christ is come well, with us to dwell,  
 By His most noble birth.*

"Graciously conceived have I  
 The Son of God so sweet;  
 His gracious will I put me till,<sup>2</sup>  
 As mother Him to keep."

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, sing we with mirth,  
 Christ is come well, with us to dwell,  
 By His most noble birth.*

"Both night and day, I will Him pray,  
 And hear His laws ytaught,  
 And every deal His true gospel  
 In His apostles fraught."

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> To.

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, sing we with mirth,  
Christ is come well, with us to dwell,  
By His most noble birth.*

“ This ghostly case doth me embrace,  
Without despite or mock,  
With my darling, lullay to sing,  
And lovely Him to rock.”

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, sing we with mirth,  
Christ is come well, with us to dwell,  
By His most noble birth.*

“ Without distress, in great lightness,  
I am both night and day ;  
This heavenly Fode,<sup>1</sup> in His childhood,  
Shall daily with me play.”

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, sing we with mirth,  
Christ is come well, with us to dwell,  
By His most noble birth.*

“ Soon must I sing, with rejoicing,  
For the time is all run,  
That I shall child, all undefiled,  
The King of heaven's Son.”

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, sing we with mirth,  
Christ is come well, with us to dwell,  
By His most noble birth.*

<sup>1</sup> Nursling, creature.

*Puer nobis natus est,  
De virgine Maria*

About 1456.

Be glad, lordings, be ye more and less,  
I bring you tidings of gladness,  
As Gabriel me beareth witness,  
*Dicam vobis quia.*

I bring you tidings that be good,  
Mary hath borne a blissful Fode,  
That bought us all upon the Rood,  
*Sua morte pia.*

For the trespass of Adam,  
Fro the Father of heaven He came,  
Hereto to myrthē us began,  
*Teste profecia.*

Mary, mother and lief virgin,  
That bare a child withouten sin,  
Keep us all fro hellē pain,  
*De virgine Maria.*

*She may be called a Sovereign Lady*<sup>1</sup>

1530.

*She may be called a sovereign lady,  
That is a maid and beareth a baby.*

A MAID peerless hath born God's Son;  
Nature gave place

<sup>1</sup> Printed in the book known as *BASSUS*, in the British Museum, K. 1, e. 1, which contains the bass part of a song-book.

When ghostly grace  
Subdued reason.

*She may be called a sovereign lady,  
That is a maid and beareth a baby.*

As for beauty or high gentry, she is the flower,  
By God elect,  
For this effect,  
Man to succour.

*She may be called a sovereign lady,  
That is a maid and beareth a baby.*

Of virgins queen, lodestar of light,  
Whom to honour  
We ought endeavour  
Us day and night.

*She may be called a sovereign lady,  
That is a maid and beareth a baby.*

*Virgo, rosa virginum, Tuum precor Filium*

Before 1536.

QUEEN of heaven, blessed may thou be,  
For God's Son born He was of thee,  
For to make us free.

*Gloria Tibi, Domine !*

Jesu, God's Son, born He was  
In a crib with hay and grass,  
And died for us on the Cross.

*Gloria Tibi, Domine !*

## CAROLS OF THE NATIVITY

To our Lady make we our moan,  
That she may pray to her dear Son,  
That we may to His bliss come.

*Gloria Tibi, Domine!*

*"Marvel not, Joseph, on Mary mild;<sup>1</sup>  
Forsake her not though she be with child"*

*Temp. Henry VII. or VIII.*

"I, JOSEPH, wonder how this may be,  
That Mary waxed great when I and she  
Ever have lived in chastity;  
If she be with child, it is not by me."

*"Marvel not, Joseph."*

"The Holy Ghost, with merciful distense,<sup>2</sup>  
In her hath entered without offense,  
God and man conceived by His presence,  
And she virgin pure without violence.

*Marvel not, Joseph."*

"What the angel of God to me doth say,  
I, Joseph, must and will humble obey,  
Else privily I would have stolen away;  
But now will I serve her till I die."

*"Marvel not, Joseph."*

Joseph, thou shalt her maid and mother find,  
Her Son Redeptor of all mankind,  
Thy forefathers of pains to unbind;  
Therefore muse not this matter in thy mind.

*Marvel not, Joseph."*

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> *Seemingly a unique form for distension.*







*Joseph being an Aged Man*

*Joseph being an Aged Man*<sup>1</sup>

Traditional.

JOSEPH being an aged man truly,  
 He married a virgin fair and free ;  
 A purer virgin could no man see  
 Than he chose for his wife and dearest dear.

The Virgin was pure, there was no nay,  
 The Angel Gabriel to her did say,  
 "Thou shalt conceive a Child this day,  
 The which shall be our dearest dear."

The Angel no sooner this message said  
 But all in heart she was afraid :  
 "How may this be, and I a pure maid ?  
 Say then to me, my dearest dear."

"The Holy Ghost, Mary, shall come unto thee,  
 The power of it shall overshadow thee,  
 And thou shalt bear a Son truly,  
 The which shall be our dearest dear."

Joseph being a perfect mild man,  
 Perceiving that Mary with child was gone,  
 Said, "Tell to me, Mary, and do not frown,  
 Who hath done this, my dearest dear ?"

Then answered Mary meek and mild :  
 "I know no father unto my child  
 But the Holy Ghost, and I undefiled ;  
 That hath done this, my dearest dear."

<sup>1</sup> See note.

But Joseph thinking her most unjust,  
Yielding her body to unlawful lust,  
Out of his house he thought for to thrust  
His own true love, his dearest dear.

But whilst in heart he thought the same,  
The Angel Gabriel to him came,  
As he lay sleeping on a frame,  
Still dreaming on his dearest dear,

Who said, "Fear not to take to thee  
Thy true and faithful wife Mary;  
Most true and faithful is she to thee,  
Then turn not away thy dearest dear."

When Joseph arose from his sleep so sound,  
His love to Mary did more abound,  
He would not for ten thousand pound  
Forsake his love and dearest dear.

They livèd both in joy and bliss;  
But now a strict commandment is,  
In Jewry land no man should miss  
To go along with his dearest dear,

Unto the place where He was born,  
Unto the emperor to be sworn,  
To pay a tribute that is duly known,  
Both for himself and his dearest dear.

And when they were to Bethlehem come,  
The inns were filled, both all and some,  
For Joseph entreated them every one,  
But could get no bed for his dearest dear.

Then were they constrain'd presently  
Within a stable all night to lie,  
Where they did oxen and asses tie  
    With his true love and dearest dear.

The Virgin pure thought it no scorn  
To lie in such a place forlorn ;  
But against the next morning our Saviour was born,  
    Even Jesus Christ, our dearest dear.

The King of all power in Bethlehem born,  
Who wore for our sakes a crown of thorn ;  
Then God preserve us both even and morn,  
    For Jesus' sake, our dearest dear !

## ECCE ANCILLA DOMINI<sup>1</sup>

*Nowell, ell, ell, ell, ell, ell, ell, ell, ell, ell,  
ell, ell, ell, ell, ell, ell*

Fifteenth Century.

Nowell, ell, both old and ying,<sup>2</sup>  
Nowell, ell, now may we sing  
In worship of our heaven[ly] King,  
Almighty God in Trinity.

Listen, lordings, both lief and dear,  
Listen, ladies, with glad cheer,  
A song of mirth now may ye hear,  
How Christ our brother He would be.

An angel from heaven was sent full snell,<sup>3</sup>  
His name is clepēd Gabriel,  
His errand he did full snell,  
He sat on knee and said "Ave."

And he said : " Mary, full of grace,  
Heaven and earth in every place,  
Within the time of little space,  
Reconcilēd it should be."

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> Young.  
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<sup>3</sup> Quickly.

Mary stood still as any stone,  
 And to the angel she said anon :  
 " Then heard I never of man [his] moan,  
 " Methinketh wonder thou sayest to me."

The angel answered anon full well :  
 " Mary dread thee never a deal,  
 Thou shalt conceive a child full well,  
 The Holy Ghost shall shadow thee."

Mary on breast her hand she laid,  
 Still she stood and thus she said :  
 " Lo me here, God's own handmaid,  
 With heart and will and body free."

Mary mother, maiden mild,  
 For the love all of thy Child,  
 Fro Hellē pit thou us shield ;  
 Amen, amen, now singē we.

*Regina celi, letare*

Fifteenth Century.

GABRIEL, that angel bright,  
 Brighter than the sun is light,  
 From heaven to earth he took his flight.  
*Letare.*

In Nazareth, that great city,  
 Before a maiden he kneeled on knee,  
 And said, " Mary, God is with thee.  
*Letare.*"

“ Hail, Mary, full of grace,  
 God is with thee and ever was ;  
 He hath in thee chosen a place.

*Letare.*”

Mary was afraid of that sight,  
 That came to her with so great light.  
 Then said the angel that was so bright,

“ *Letare.*”

“ Be not aghast of least nor most,  
 In thee is conceived the Holy Ghost,  
 To save the souls that were for-lost.

*Letare.*”

*Nova, nova: Ave fit ex Eva*

Fifteenth Century.

GABRIEL of high degree,  
 He came down from the Trinity,  
 From Nazareth to Galilee,<sup>1</sup>

*Ut nova.*

He met a maiden in a place ;  
 He kneelēd down before her face ;  
 He said : “ Hail, Mary, full of grace ! ”

*Ut nova.*

When the maiden saw all this,  
 She was sore abashed, ywis,  
 Lest that she had done amiss.

*Ut nova.*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the carol on p. 35 for the same geographical error.



Then said the angel : " Dread not you,  
Ye shall conceive in all virtue  
A child whose name shall be Jesu."

*Ut nova.*

Then said the maid : " How may this be,  
Godës Son to be born of me ?  
I know not of man's carnality."

*Ut nova.*

Then said the angel anon right :  
" The Holy Ghost is on thee alight ;  
There is no thing impossible to God Almighty."

*Ut nova.*

Then said the angel anon :  
" It is not fully six month ago,  
Since Saint Elizabeth conceived Saint John."

*Ut nova.*

Then said the maid anon quickly :  
" I am Godës own truly,  
*Ecce ancilla Domini.*"

*Ut nova.*

*Make we merry this new year,  
Thanking God with hearty cheer*

Before 1529.

GABRIEL, brighter than the sun,  
Graciously greeted that maiden free ;  
Through her meekness Christ have we found,  
*Ecce ancilla Domini.*

## CAROLS OF THE NATIVITY

Ave Maria, virgin bright,  
 We joyeth of thy virginity ;  
 The Holy Ghost is on thee light,  
 Thou hast conceived thy Son so free.

Now is that maidē great with child,  
 Herself alone also credibly ;  
 Fro the fiend she shall us shield ;  
 So sayeth books in their story.

*Now we should sing and say nowell,  
 Quia missus est angelus Gabriel*

Before 1536.

FROM heaven was sent an angel of light,  
 Unto a city that Nazareth hight,  
 Unto a maid, a bride so bright,  
 And full of bliss ;  
*Nomen Maria virginis.*

The angel went forth and naught he ceased,  
 Before that maiden he him soon dressed,  
 He said : " All hail, thou art full blessed,  
 And gracious,  
*Quia tecum est Dominus !*"

When Mary this heard, astonied was she,  
 And thought what this greeting might be.  
 The angel her showed of grace plenty  
 And great solace,  
*Et dixit : " Maria, ne timeas."*

The angel said : " Thou maiden mild,  
Thou shalt conceive and bear a child ;  
Thy maidenhood shall be never defiled ;  
Call Him Jesus,  
*Hic [erit] Altissimi Filius.*"

When Mary, as bright as crystal stone,  
These wordēs heard, [she] answered anon,  
And asked how all this might be done,  
And said : " How so ?  
*Quia virum non cognosco.*"

The angel said : " Thou maiden still,  
The Holy Ghost shall thee fulfill."  
The maid answered with voice so shrill,  
And said meekly :  
*" Ecce ancilla Domini."*

Soon after this, this Child was born,  
In Bethlehem, in a winter's morn.  
Now make we merry Him befor,  
And sing *nowell*,  
*Quia missus est angelus Gabriel !*

*What, heard ye not, the King of Jerusalem  
Is now born in Bethlehem?*

Before 1536.

I SHALL you tell a great marvel,  
How an angel, for our avail,  
Came to a maid, and said: "All hail!"  
*What, heard ye not, the King of Jerusalem  
Is now born in Bethlehem?*

"All hail," he said, "and full of grace,  
God is with thee now in this place,  
A child thou shalt bear in little space."  
*What, heard ye not, the King of Jerusalem  
Is now born in Bethlehem?*

"A child!" she said. "How may that be?  
There had never no man knowledge of me."  
"The Holy Ghost," he said, "shall light in thee."  
*What, heard ye not, the King of Jerusalem  
Is now born in Bethlehem?*

"And as thou art, so shalt thou be,"  
The angel said, "in virginity,  
Before and after in every degree."  
*What, heard ye not, the King of Jerusalem  
Is now born in Bethlehem?*

The maid answered the angel again:  
"If God will that this be sayn,<sup>1</sup>  
The wordës be to me full fain."

Said,

*What, heard ye not, the King of Jerusalem  
Is now born in Bethlehem ?*

Now will we all, in rejoicing  
That we have heard this good tiding,  
To that Child *Te Deum* sing :  
*Te Deum laudamus.*

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,  
This is the salutation of Gabriel*

Before 1536.

TIDINGS true, there be come new,  
Sent from the Trinity  
By Gabriel from Nazareth to a city of Galilee :  
“ A clean maiden, a pure virgin,  
By her humility  
Hath born the Person Second in Divinity.”  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,  
This is the salutation of Gabriel.*

When that he presented was  
Before her fair visage,  
In most demure and goodly wise  
He did to her homage,  
And said : “ Lady, from heaven so high,  
That Lord's [own] heritage,  
For He of thee will born now be,  
I am sent on the message.”  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,  
This is the salutation of Gabriel.*

"Hail, virgin celestial,  
 The meekest that ever was!  
 Hail, temple of the Deity!  
 Hail, mirror of all grace!  
 Hail, virgin pure! I thee ensure,  
 Within a little space  
 Thou shalt conceive and Him receive  
 That shall bring great solace."  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,*  
*This is the salutation of Gabriel.*

Then bespake the virgin again,  
 And answered womanly:  
 "Whatsoever my Lord commandeth me,  
 I will obey truly.  
*Ecce sum humilima ancilla Domini:  
 Secundum verbum Tuum fiat michi."*  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,*  
*This is the salutation of Gabriel.*

### *A New Carol of Our Lady*<sup>1</sup>

546-21.

LORDS and ladies all bydene,<sup>2</sup>  
 For your goodness and honour,  
 will you sing all of a queen;  
 Of all women she is the flower.  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,*  
*This said the angel Gabriel.*

<sup>1</sup> Richard Kele's *Christmas Carols*, in Bliss's *Bibliographical Miscellanies*, 1813.

<sup>2</sup> Together.

Of Jesse there sprang a wight,  
Isaiah said by prophecy,  
Of whom shall come a man of might,  
From death to life He will us buy.  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,*  
*This said the angel Gabriel.*

There came an angel bright of face,  
Flying from heaven with full great light,  
And said, "Hail! Mary, full of grace,  
For thou shalt bear a man of might."  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,*  
*This said the angel Gabriel.*

Astonied was that lady free,  
And had marvel of that greeting.  
"Angel," she said, "how may that be?  
For never of man I had knowing."  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,*  
*This said the angel Gabriel.*

"Dread thou nothing, Mary mild,  
Thou art fulfilled with great virtue;  
Thou shalt conceive and bear a child  
That shall be namèd sweet Jesu."  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,*  
*This said the angel Gabriel.*

She kneelèd down upon her knee,  
With heart, thought, and mild cheer:  
"As thou hast said, so may it be,  
God's handmaid I am here."  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,*  
*This said the angel Gabriel.*



Then began her womb to spring,  
 She went with child without man,  
 He that is lord over all thing,  
 His flesh and blood of her had then.  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,*  
*This said the angel Gabriel.*

Of her was born our Heaven-King,  
 And she a maid nevertheless ;  
 Therefore be merry and let us sing,  
 For this new lord of Christmas.  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,*  
*This said the angel Gabriel.*

*The Conception of Christ*<sup>1</sup>

Before 1567.

LET us rejoice and sing  
 And praise that mighty King,  
 Whilk sent His Son of a virgin bricht.  
*La-lay-la.*

And on Him tuke our vile nature,  
 Our deadly woundēs to cure,  
 Mankind to hold in richt.  
*La-lay-la.*

Saint Luke writes in his gospel,  
 God sent His angel Gabriel  
 Unto that virgin but <sup>2</sup> defame,  
*La-lay-la.*

<sup>1</sup> *Ane Compendious Buik of Godlie and Spirituall Sangis.* See note.

<sup>2</sup> Without.

For to fulfil the prophecy,  
Was spousit with Joseph free ;  
Marie she had to name.

*La-lay-la.*

Thir words to her he did rehearse,  
“ Hail, Marie, full of grace,  
The Lord God is with thee ! ”

*La-lay-la.*

“ Thou blessed virgin mild,  
Thou sall conceive ane Child,  
The people redeem sall He.”

*La-lay-la.*

“ Whose power and great micht  
Sall be in Godës sicht,  
Whilk from the Fader of micht is sent.”

*La-lay-la.*

“ Jesus His name ye call  
Whilk sall be prince over all,  
His kingdom sall have nane end.”

*La-lay-la.*

Than spake that virgin free,  
“ Behold, how sall this be,  
Seeing I know na man ? ”

*La-lay-la.*

Than said the angel chaste,  
“ By the power of the Haly Ghaist,  
Whilk all thing work He can.”

*La-lay-la.*

“ Elizabeth thy cousin also,  
Six moneth with child can go,  
At whose birth great joy sall be.”

*La-lay-la.*

“ Call him John,” says the angel bricht,  
Whilk is sent by Godēs nicht,  
The Lordēs way prepare sall he.”

*La-lay-la.*





*In Die Nativitatis*

## IN DIE NATIVITATIS<sup>1</sup>

*Blessed be that lady bright,  
That bare a child of great might,  
Withouten pain, as it was right,  
Maid mother Mary.*

Fifteenth Century.

God's Son is born, His mother is a maid  
Both after and beforne, as the prophecy said,  
With ay ;  
A wonder-thing it is to see,  
How maiden and mother one may be ;  
Was there never none but she,  
*Maid mother Mary.*

This great Lord of heaven our servant is become,  
Through Gabriel's steven,<sup>2</sup> our kind hath taken on,  
With ay ;  
A wonder-thing it is to see,  
How lord and servant one may be ;  
Was there never none but He,  
*Born of maid Mary.*

Two suns together they ought to shine bright ;  
So did that fair lady when Jesu in her light,<sup>3</sup>  
With ay ;

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> Voice.

<sup>3</sup> Alighted.

A wonder-thing doth befall :  
 The Lord that boughtē free and thrall,  
 Is found in an ass's stall,  
*By His mother Mary.*

The shepherds in their region they lookēd into heaven,  
 They see an angel coming down, that said with mildē steven,  
 With ay :  
 " Joy be to God Almighty,  
 And peace in earth to man is dight,<sup>1</sup>  
 For God was born on Christmas night,  
*Of His mother Mary."*

Three kings of great noblay,<sup>2</sup> when that Child was born,  
 To Him they took the ready way, and kneelēd Him beforne,  
 With ay ;  
 These three kings came fro far,  
 Through leading of a star,  
 And offered Him gold, incense and myrrh,  
*And to His mother Mary.*

*A Little Child There is Yborn*

Before 1536.

*Gloria Tibi, Domine,  
 Qui natus es de virgine !*  
 A little child there is yborn,  
 Out of Jesse's stock ycorn,<sup>3</sup>  
 To save all us that were forlorn.  
*Gloria Tibi, Domine,  
 Qui natus es de virgine !*

<sup>1</sup> Prepared.

<sup>2</sup> Rank.

<sup>3</sup> Chosen. *The original reads: Yspronge out of Jesses more (stock).*

Jesus that is so full of might  
 Yborn He was about midnight ;  
 The angels sang with all their might :  
*Gloria Tibi, Domine,*  
*Qui natus es de virgine !*

Jesus is that Childës name,  
 Maid and mother is His dame,  
 And so our sorrow is turned to game.<sup>1</sup>  
*Gloria Tibi, Domine,*  
*Qui natus es de virgine !*

Three kings there came with their presents,  
 Of myrrh and gold and frankincense,  
 As clerkës sing in their sequence.  
*Gloria Tibi, Domine,*  
*Qui natus es de virgine !*

Now sit we down upon our knee,  
 And pray that Child that is so free ;  
 And with good heartë now sing we :  
*Gloria Tibi, Domine,*  
*Qui natus es de virgine !*

*All this time this song is best :*  
*Verbum caro factum est*

Before 1536.

THIS night there is a Child [y]born,  
 That sprang out of Jesse's thorn ;  
 We must sing and say thereforn :  
*Verbum caro factum est.*

<sup>1</sup> Joy.



Jesus is the Childës name  
 And Mary mild is His dame,  
 All our sorrow is turned to game :  
*Verbum caro factum est.*

It fell upon [the] high midnight,  
 The stars [they] shone both fair and bright,  
 The angels sang with all their might :  
*Verbum caro factum est.*

Now kneel we down [up]on our knee,  
 And pray we to the Trinity,  
 Our help, our succour for to be.  
*Verbum caro factum est.*

*Now be we glad, and not too sad,  
 For verbum caro factum est*

Fifteenth Century.

THIS may I prove withouten let :<sup>1</sup>  
 When Gabriel our lady gret.<sup>2</sup>  
 On his knee he him set  
 So mildly :  
 "Thou shalt conceive this samë day,  
*Salvatorem mundi.*"

A star shone through Godës grace,  
 As Godës ownë will it was ;  
 The shepherds saw in that place  
 Angels two ;  
 And them among they sang a song,  
 " *Gloria in excelsis Deo !* "

<sup>1</sup> Hindrance.

<sup>2</sup> Greeted.

The Child was born upon Yule day,  
 As prophets to us could say ;  
 His mother sang *lullay, lullay,*  
                                 Into the east ;  
 Therefore mankind withouten end  
           Sing, "*Verbum caro factum est.*"

And then by tokening of a star,  
 Three kings there camē from [a]far,  
 And offered frankincense and myrrh  
           To Christ so free ;  
 Then they said with merry cheer,  
           "*Mane nobiscum, Domine.*"

Therefore pray we every one  
 To the Bairn that time was born,  
 He save us all from shame and scorn,  
           In peace and rest ;  
 And all mankind withouten end,  
           Sing, "*Verbum caro factum est.*"

*Eia Jesus hodie  
 Natus est de virgine*

Fifteenth Century.

BLESSED be that maid Mary,  
 Born He was of her body,  
 Godēs Son that sitteth on high,  
           *Non ex virili semine.*

In a manger of an ass  
 Jesu lay and lullēd was,  
 Hardē painēs for to pass,  
           *Pro peccante homine.*

Kingēs came fro divers land,  
 With great giftēs in`their hand,  
 In Bethlehem the Child they found,  
*Stelle ducti lumine.*

Man and child, both old and ying,  
 Now in His blissful coming,  
 To that Child may we sing,  
*Gloria Tibi, Domine!*

Nowell, nowell, in this hall,  
 Make merry, I pray you all,  
 Unto the Child may we call,  
*Ullo sine crimine.*

*Christo paremus canticam, excelsis gloria*

About 1500.

WHEN Christ was born of Mary free,  
 In Bethlehem, in that fair city,  
 Angels sungen with mirth and glee,  
*"In excelsis gloria!"*

Herdmen beheld these angels bright,  
 To them appearēd with great light,  
 And said, "God's Son is born this night,  
*In excelsis gloria!"*

This King is come to save [His] kind,  
 As in Scripturs we [may] find ;  
 Therefore this song have we in mind,  
*“ In excelsis gloria ! ”*

Then, Lord, for Thy great grace,  
 [Grant us] the bliss to see Thy face,  
 Where we may sing to Thee solace,  
*In excelsis gloria !*

*Man, be glad in hall and bower,  
 This time was born our Saviour*

Fifteenth Century.

IN this time Christ <sup>1</sup> hath us sent  
 His own Son in present,  
 To dwellë with us verament,  
 To be our help and succour.

In this time rose a star clear,  
 Over Bethlehem, as bright as fire,  
 In token that He had no peer,  
 Lord God, king and emperor.

In this time it is befall,  
 He that diëd for us all,  
 Born He was in ass's stall,  
 Of Mary, that sweet flower.

<sup>1</sup> For God.

In this time came three kings,  
 They came fro far with richē things,  
 For to make their offerings,  
     On their knees with great honour.

In this timē pray we  
 To Him that diēd on the Tree,  
 On us have mercy and pity,  
     And bring us all to His tower.

*Man, be merry as bird on berry,  
 And all thy care let away*

Fifteenth Century.

THIS time is born a Child full good,  
 He that us bought upon the Rood ;  
 He bound the devil that is so wode,<sup>1</sup>  
     Till the dreadful Doomēday.

When the Child of mickle might  
 Would be born of Mary bright,  
 A token He sent to king and knight,  
     A star that shone both night and day.

The star [it] shone as bright as fire,  
 Over all the world both far and near,  
 In token He was withouten peer ;  
     And peerless He shall lasten ay.

<sup>1</sup> Wild.

The eighth day He was circumcised,  
 For to fulfil the prophesie[s];  
 The prophets [all] with wordēs wise  
 Him present with rich array.

The Twelfth Day come kingēs three,  
 Out of the East, with heartēs free,  
 To worship Him they kneeled on knee,  
 With gold and myrrh and frankincense.<sup>1</sup>

*Nowell, ell, ell, ell,  
 Now is well that ever was woe*

Fifteenth Century.

A BABE is born all of a may<sup>2</sup>  
 In the salvation of us,  
 To Him we singen both night and day,  
*Veni, Creator Spiritus.*

At Bethlehem, that blessed place,  
 The Child of bliss born He was;  
 Him to serve [O] give us grace,  
*O lux beata Trinitas.*

There came three kings out of the East,  
 To worship the King that is so free,  
 With gold and myrrh and frankincense,  
*A solis ortus cardine.*

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> Maiden.

The herdës hearden an angel-cry,  
 A merry song then sungen they,<sup>1</sup>  
 "Why are ye so sore aghast?"  
*Jam ortus solis cardine.*

The angels came down with a cry,  
 A fair song then sungen they  
 In the worship of that Child,  
*Gloria tibi, Domine!*

*To bliss God bring us all and some,  
 Christe, Redemptor omnium*

Fifteenth Century.

IN Bethlehem, that fair city,  
 Was born a Child that was so free,  
 Lord and prince of high degree,  
*Jam lucis orto sidere.*

Jesu, for the love of Thee,  
 Children were slain great plenty  
 In Bethlehem, that fair city,  
*A solis ortus cardine.*

As the sun shineth in the glass,  
 So Jesus of His mother born was  
 Him to serve God give us grace,  
*O lux beata Trinitas.*

Now is He our Lord Jesus,  
 Thus hath He verily visited us;  
 Now to make merry among us,  
*Exultet celum laudibus.*

<sup>1</sup> The angels.

*Now let us sing, both more and less  
Of Christ's coming Deo gracias*

Before 1536.

A VIRGIN pure, this is full sure,  
Gabriel did her greet,  
And all her cure,<sup>1</sup> I am full sure,  
Ever did endure,  
*Deo gracias !*

A Babe was born, early by the morn,  
And laid between the ox and the ass.  
The Child they knew that was born new,  
On Him they blew :  
*Deo gracias !*

An angel full soon sang from aboon :<sup>2</sup>  
*Gloria in excelsis !*  
That lady alone might make no moan,  
For love of One,  
*Deo gracias !*

This Babe us bought when we were brought  
Into great thought and dreadful case ;  
Therefore we sing, both old and ying,  
Of Christ's coming :  
*Deo gracias !*

<sup>1</sup> Care.

<sup>2</sup> Above.



*Make we merry in hall and bower,  
This time is born our Saviour*

Before 1536.

In this timē God hath sent  
His own Son to be present,  
To dwell with us in verament,<sup>1</sup>  
*God that is our Saviour.*

In this time that is befall,  
A Child was born in an ox-stall,  
And after He died for us all,  
*God that is our Saviour.*

In this time an angel bright,  
Met three shepherds upon a night,  
He bade them go anon right,  
*To God that is our Saviour.*

In this timē now pray we,  
To Him that died for us on Tree,  
On us all to have pity,  
*God that is our Saviour.*

*Conditor alme siderum,  
Eterna Lux credencium*

Before 1536.

THERE is a Child born of Mary,  
In salvation of all us,  
That we should worship every day,  
With *veni, Creator Spiritus.*

<sup>1</sup> In verity.

In Bethlehem, in that holy place,  
 This blessed Child born He was,  
 Him to serve, He gave us grace  
 With *Trinitatis unitas*.

The shepherds heard that angel's song,  
 And worshipped God in Trinity,  
 That so nigh was them among,  
*Iam lucis orto sidere.*

Each man began to cry and call,  
 To Him that sitteth on high,  
 To His bliss to bring them all,  
*Iesu, Salvator seculi.*

*Make we Joy in this Feast*<sup>1</sup>

Fifteenth Century.

MAKE we joy in this feast, *in quo Christus natus est,*  
*A Patre Unigenitus*, to a maiden is come to us ;  
 Sing we of Him and say we, "Welcome, *veni, Redemptor*  
*gencium.*"

*Agnoscat omne seculum*, a bright star kings made come ;  
 For to take with their presents, *verbum superum prodiens.*  
*A solis ortus cardine*, so mighty a lord is none as He.

. . . And<sup>2</sup> to our Lord He hath grith.<sup>3</sup>  
*Marya ventre concepit*, the Holy Ghost was ay her with ;  
 Of her in Bethlehem now born He is, *Consors Paterni*  
*luminis,*

*Alma beata Trinitas*, that lay between an ox and ass,  
 By His mother maiden free, *gloria Tibi, Domine.*

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> The Latin half of the line is missing.

<sup>3</sup> Peace

*A Carol of the Birth of Christ*<sup>1</sup>

1521.

*Come to Bethlehem*<sup>2</sup> and ye shall see  
*Puer natus est bodie.*

*A woman, a maid, &c.*

*Sinful man, &c.*

*On the Cross, &c.*

FAREWELL, Advent, and have good day;  
 Christmas is come, now go thy way.  
 Get thee hence! What dost thou here?  
 Thou hast no love of no beggar.  
 Thou makest us fast with evil cheer  
 With farewell, Advent.  
 Thou takest on thee more than doth the Lent,  
 The[n] dwellest so long that thou art shent.<sup>2</sup>  
 When *alleluia* is aloft,  
 I go gay and sit soft,  
 And then I am merry oft,  
 As any bird on briar.  
 When *laus Tibi*<sup>3</sup> cometh to town,  
 Then me behoveth to kneel adown,  
 And ever to be in orison,  
 As it were a friar.  
 Soon at Easter cometh *alleluia*,  
 With butter, cheese, and a tansy;<sup>4</sup>  
 It is nothing to my pay<sup>5</sup>  
 That he tarryeth so long away.

<sup>1</sup> Two leaves of *Christmas Carolles*, printed by Wynkyn de Worde.

<sup>2</sup> Blamed.

<sup>3</sup> Lent.

<sup>4</sup> See note.

<sup>5</sup> Pleasure.

Might I bide Shere-Thursday  
*Laus Tibi* shall go away ;  
 And I have wept that I may,  
 Though he never come us among.

*The First Nowell the Angel did Say*<sup>1</sup>

Traditional.

THE first nowell the angel did say  
 Was to three poor shepherds in the fields as they lay,  
 In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,  
 In a cold winter's night that was so deep.

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,  
 Born is the King of Israel.*

They looked up and saw a star  
 Shining in the East beyond them far,  
 And to the earth it gave great light,  
 And so it continued both day and night.

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,  
 Born is the King of Israel.*

And by the light of that same star  
 Three Wise Men came from country far ;  
 To seek for a King was their intent,  
 And to follow the star wherever it went.

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,  
 Born is the King of Israel.*

The star drew nigh to the North-West,  
 O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,

<sup>1</sup> See note.

And there it did both stop and stay  
 Right over the place where Jesus lay.  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,*  
*Born is the King of Israel.*

Then did they know assuredly  
 Within that house the King did lie ;  
 One entered in then for to see,  
 And found the Babe in poverty.  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,*  
*Born is the King of Israel.*

Then entered in those Wise Men three  
 Most reverently upon their knee,  
 And offered there in his presence  
 Both gold and myrrh and frankincense.  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,*  
*Born is the King of Israel.*

Between an ox-stall and an ass  
 This Child truly there born He was ;  
 For want of clothing they did Him lay  
 All in the manger, among the hay.  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,*  
*Born is the King of Israel.*

Then let us all with one accord  
 Sing praises to our heavenly Lord,  
 That hath made heaven and earth of nought,  
 And with His blood mankind hath bought.  
*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,*  
*Born is the King of Israel.*

If we in our time shall do well,  
 We shall be free from death and hell;  
 For God hath preparèd for us all  
 A resting place in general.

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,  
 Born is the King of Israel.*

*Out of the Orient, Crystal Skies*<sup>1</sup>

About 1613.

Out of the orient, crystal skies  
 A blazing star did shine,  
 Showing the place where poo.'y lies  
 A blessed Babe divine,

Born of a maid of royal blood  
 Who Mary hight by name,  
 A sacred rose which once did bud  
 By grace of heavenly flame.

This shining star three kings did guide  
 Even from the furthest East,  
 To Bethlehem where it betide  
 This blessed Babe did rest,

Laid in a silly manger poor,  
 Betwixt an ox and ass,  
 Whom these three kings did all adore  
 As God's high pleasure was.

<sup>1</sup> MS. Additional 29,401, fol. 51b, 52. See note.

And for the joy of His great birth  
A thousand angels sing :  
“ Glory and peace unto the earth  
Where born is this new King ! ”

The shepherds dwelling there about,  
Where they this news did know,  
Came singing all even in a rout,  
“ Falantidingdido, falantidingdido, falantidingdido ! ”

## O JESU PARVULE<sup>1</sup>

### *I Saw a Sweet and Silly Sight*<sup>2</sup>

Fifteenth Century.

I SAW a sweet [and] silly<sup>3</sup> sight,  
A blissful bride, a blossom bright  
That mourning made and mirth among.  
A maiden mother, meek and mild,  
In cradle kept a knavē child  
That softly slept ; she sat and sang.  
“ *Lullay, lullow, lully, lullay, lully, lully, lully, lully, lully,*  
*Lullow, lully, lullay, baw, baw,*  
*My bairn, sleep softly now.”*

### *This Endernight*<sup>4</sup> *I Saw a Sight*

Fifteenth Century.

THIS endernight  
I saw a sight,  
A star as bright as day ;  
And ever among  
A maiden sang,  
*Lullay, by-by, lullay.*

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>3</sup> Blessed.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Additional 5666, fols. 4b, 5.

<sup>4</sup> This other night, *i.e.* recently.



This lovely lady sat and sang and to her child gan say :  
 " My Son, my Lord, my Father dear, why liest Thou in hay ?  
     Mine own dear Son,  
     How art Thou come,  
         Art Thou not God *veray* ?  
     But nevertheless  
     I will not cease  
         To sing, *by-by, lullay.*"

The Child then spake in His talking, and to His mother said :  
 " I callèd am a king, in crib though I be laid,  
     But angels bright  
     Down to me light,  
         Thou knowest it is no nay ;  
     And of that sight  
     Thou mayest be light  
         To sing, *by-by, lullay.*"

" Now, sweet Son, since Thou art King, why art Thou laid  
     in stall ?  
 Why hast Thou no rich bedding in some great kingës hall ?  
     Methinketh by right,  
     Thou, King and Knight,  
         Should lie in rich array ;  
     And then among,  
     It were no wrong  
         To sing, *by-by, lullay.*"

" Mary, mother, I am thy child, though I be laid in stall,  
 Lords and dukes shall worship me and so shall kingës all.  
     Ye shall well see  
     That kingës three  
         Shall come the twelfth day ;

For this behest  
 Give me thy breast  
 And sing, *by-by, lullay.*"

"Now tell me, sweet Son, I Thee pray, Thou art me lief  
 and dear,  
 How should I keep Thee to Thy pay<sup>1</sup> and make Thee glad  
 of cheer ?

For all Thy will  
 I would fulfill,  
 Thou wittest full well, in fay ;  
 Yet more than this,  
 I will Thee kiss  
 And sing, *by-by, lullay.*"

"My mother dear, when time it be, thou take me up aloft,  
 And set me right upon thy knee, and handle me full soft,

And in thine arm  
 Thou lap me warm,  
 And keep me night and day ;  
 And if I weep,  
 And may not sleep,  
 Thou sing, *by-by, lullay.*"

"Now, sweet Son, since it is so, that all things are at Thy will,  
 I pray Thee grant me now a boon, if it be right and skill,<sup>2</sup>

That child or man  
 That will or can  
 Be merry upon this day,  
 To bliss them bring,  
 And I shall sing,  
*Lullay, by-by, lullay.*"

<sup>1</sup> Content.

<sup>2</sup> Proper.

" My mother sheen, of heaven queen, your asking shall I  
     speed,  
 So that the mirth displease me not; in words nor yet in deed,  
     Sing what ye will,  
     So that ye fulfill,  
         My ten commandments ay ;  
     Ay you for to please,  
     Let them not cease  
         To sing, *by, baby, lullay.*"

*This Endernight I saw a Sight*

Fifteenth Century.

*" Ah, my dear Son," said Mary, " ah, my dear,  
 Kiss Thy mother, Jesu, with a laughing cheer."*

THIS endernight I saw a sight,  
     All in my sleep :  
 Mary, that may, she sang lullay  
     And sore did weep ;  
 To keep she sought full fast about  
     Her Son from cold.  
 Joseph said, " Wife, my joy, my life,  
     Say what ye would."  
 " Nothing, my spouse, is in this house  
     Unto my pay ;  
 My Son a king, that made all thing,  
     Lieth in hay.  
*Ah, my dear Son," said Mary, " ah, my dear,  
 Kiss Thy mother, Jesu, with a laughing cheer."*  
 " My mother dear, amend your cheer  
     And now be still ;

Thus for to lie it is soothly  
 My Father's will ;  
 Derision, great passion,  
 Infinitely,  
 As it is found, many a wound  
 Suffer shall I ;  
 On Calvary that is so high  
 There shall I be,  
 Man to restore, nailèd full sore  
 Upon a tree."

" Ah, my dear Son," said Mary, " ah, my dear,  
 Kiss Thy mother, Jesu, with a laughing cheer."

" *Quid Petis, O Fili ?*"

*Temp.* Henry VII. or VIII.

" *Quid petis, O Fili ?*"

*Mater dulcissima ba ba :*

" *Quid petis, O Fili ?*"

*Michi plausus oscula da da !*"

So laughing in lap laid,  
 So prettily, so pertly,  
 So passingly well apaid,<sup>1</sup>  
 Full softly and full soberly,  
 Unto her sweet Son she said :

" *Quid petis, O Fili ?*"

*Mater dulcissima ba ba :*

" *Quid petis, O Fili ?*"

*Michi plausus oscula da da !*"

<sup>1</sup> Pleased.

The mother full mannerly and meekly as a maid,  
 Looking on her little Son so laughing in lap laid,  
 So prettily, so pertly, so passingly well apaid,  
 So passingly well apaid,  
 Full softly and full soberly,  
 Unto her Son she said :

*“ Quid petis, O Fili ? ”*

*Mater dulcissima ba ba :*

*“ Quid petis, O Fili ? ”*

*Michi plausus oscula da da ! ”*

I mean this by Mary, our Maker's mother of might,  
 Full lovely looking on our Lord, the Lantern of light,  
 Thus saying to our Saviour, this saw I in my sight ;  
 This reason that [I] rede in now, I rede it full right.

*“ Quid petis, O Fili ? ”*

*Mater dulcissima ba ba :*

*“ Quid petis, O Fili ? ”*

*Michi plausus oscula da da ! ”*

Musing on her manners so, my word was my main,  
 Save it pleased me so passingly that past was my pain ;  
 Yet softly to her sweet Son methought I heard her sayn :  
 “ Now gracious God, and good sweet Babe, yet once again  
 this game.

*‘ Quid petis, O Fili ? ’*

*Mater dulcissima ba ba :*

*‘ Quid petis, O Fili ? ’*

*Michi plausus oscula da da ! ’ ”*

*A New Year, a New Year, a child was yborn,  
Us for to saven that all was forlorn,  
So blessed be the time*

Fifteenth Century.

THE Father of heaven His own Son He sent,  
His kingdom for to claimen [on earth is He lent].  
*So blessed be the time.*

All in a clean maiden our Lord was ylight,  
Us for to saven with all His might.  
*So blessed be the time.*

All of a clean maiden our Lord was yborn,  
Us for to saven that all was forlorn.  
*So blessed be the time.*

“Lullay, lullay, little Child, mine own dear fode,<sup>1</sup>  
How shalt Thou suffer [to] be nailèd on the Rood ?”  
*So blessed be the time.*

“Lullay, lullay, little Child, mine own dear smart,<sup>2</sup>  
How shalt Thou suffer the sharp spear to Thy heart ?  
*So blessed be the time.*

“Lullay, lullay, little Child, I sing all for Thy sake,  
Many [a] one is the sharp shower to Thy body is shape !”  
*So blessed be the time.*

“Lullay, lullay, little Child, fair haps Thee befall,  
How shalt Thou suffer to drink eisel<sup>3</sup> and gall ?”  
*So blessed be the time.*

<sup>1</sup> Nursling.

<sup>2</sup> Cause of grief?

<sup>3</sup> Vinegar.

“Lullay, lullay, little Child, I sing all beforne,  
How shalt Thou suffer the sharp garland of thorn ?”  
*So blessed be the time.*

“Lullay, lullay, little Child, why weepest Thou so sore,  
And art Thou [then] both God and man, what wouldest  
Thou be more ?”  
*So blessed be the time.*

Blessed be the arms the Child have tucked,<sup>1</sup>  
And also the teats the Child hath <sup>2</sup> sucked.  
*So blessed be the time.*

Blessed be the mother, the Child also,  
With *Benedicamus Domino*.  
*So blessed be the time.*

*Lullay, mine Liking, my dear Son, mine Sweeting,  
Lullay, my dear Heart, mine own dear Darling*  
Fifteenth Century.

I saw a fair maiden sit and sing,  
She lulled a little child, a sweet lording :  
*Lullay, mine Liking, my dear Son, mine Sweeting,  
Lullay, my dear Heart, mine own dear Darling.*

That very lord is He that made all things  
Of all lords He is Lord [and] King of all kings.  
*Lullay, mine Liking, my dear Son, mine Sweeting,  
Lullay, my dear Heart, mine own dear Darling.*

<sup>1</sup> *Text*: bar abowt.

<sup>2</sup> *Text*: on.

There was mickle melody at that Childës birth,  
All that were in heaven's bliss, they made mickle mirth.

*Lullay, mine Liking, my dear Son, mine Sweeting,  
Lullay, my dear Heart, mine own dear Darling.*

Angels bright they sang that night and saiden to that Child,  
"Blessed be Thou, and so be she that is both meek and  
mild."

*Lullay, mine Liking, my dear Son, mine Sweeting,  
Lullay, my dear Heart, mine own dear Darling.*

Pray we now to that Child, and to His mother dear,  
Grant them His blessing that now maken cheer.

*Lullay, mine Liking, my dear Son, mine Sweeting,  
Lullay, my dear Heart, mine own dear Darling.*

*By-by, Lullaby.<sup>1</sup>*

1530.

*By-by, lullaby, by-by, lullaby,  
Rocked I my child ;  
By-by, by-by, by-by, lullaby,  
Rocked I my child.*

In a dream late as I lay,  
Methought I heard a maiden say  
And speak these words [so] mild :  
"My little son, with thee I play,  
And come," she sang, "by, lullaby."

Thus rocked she her child.  
*By-by, lullaby, by-by, lullaby,  
Rocked I my child.  
By-by.*

<sup>1</sup> *Bassus, cf. p. 22.*



Then marvelled I right sore of this :  
A maid to have a child ywis.

“ By-by, lullaby.”

Thus rocked she her child.

*By-by, lullaby, by-by, lullaby,*

*Rocked I my child ;*

*By-by, by-by, by-by, lullaby,*

*Rocked I my child.*

*Mother, white as lily flower,*

*Your lulling lesseth my languor*

Fifteenth Century.

As I up rose in a morning,  
My thought was on a maid[en] ying,  
That sang asleep with her lulling,  
Her sweet Son, our Saviour.

As she Him held [all] in her lap,  
He took her lovely by the pap,  
And thereof sweetly He took a nap,<sup>2</sup>  
And sucked His fill of the liquor.

To His mother gan He say :  
“ For this milk me mustè die,  
It is my kind therewith to play,  
My sweet mother, *par amour*.”<sup>3</sup>

The maiden freely gan to sing,  
And in her song she made mourning,  
How He that is our heaven[ly] King  
Should shed His blood with great dolour.

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> Draught.

<sup>3</sup> For love's sake.

“Mother, thy weeping grieveth me sore,  
 Save I would die, thou hadst been lore ;<sup>1</sup>  
 So away, mother, and weep no more ;  
 Thy lulling lesseth my languor.”

Such mourning as the maiden made,  
 I cannot tell it in this hour ;  
 Therefore be merry and glad,  
 And make us merry for our Saviour.

*Lullay, My Child, and Weep no More*

Fifteenth Century.

“LULLAY, my child, and weep no more,  
 Sleep and be now still ;  
 The King of bliss thy Father is,  
 As it was His will.”

This endernight I saw a sight,  
 A maid a cradle keep,  
 And ever she sang and said among,  
 “Lullay, my child and sleep.”

“I may not sleep, but I may weep,  
 I am so woebegone ;  
 Sleep I would, but I am cold,  
 And clothës have I none.”

Methought I heard, the Child answered,  
 And to His mother He said,  
 “My mother dear, what do I here ?  
 In crib why am I laid ?

<sup>1</sup> Lost.

“ I was born and laid befor  
 Beastës, both ox and ass ;  
 My mother mild, I am thy child,  
 But He my father was.

“ Adam’s gilt this man had spilt,<sup>1</sup>  
 That sin grieveth me sore ;  
 Man, for thee here shall I be  
 Thirty winter and more.

“ Dole it is to see, here shall I be  
 Hanged upon the Rood,  
 By bailiffs beaten, my wounds a-sweating,<sup>2</sup>  
 And give my flesh for good.<sup>3</sup>

“ Here shall I be hanged on a tree,  
 And die as it is skill ;<sup>4</sup>  
 That I have bought, less will I nought ;  
 It is my Father’s will.

“ A spear so sharp shall pierce my heart,  
 For deeds that I have done.  
 Father of grace, whether Thou hast  
 Forgotten Thy little son ?

“ Without pity here shall aby,<sup>5</sup>  
 And make my flesh all blue.  
 Adam, ywis,<sup>6</sup> this death it is,  
 For thee and many mo.”

<sup>1</sup> Destroyed.

<sup>3</sup> *Text*: to bote=for help.

<sup>5</sup> Suffer.

<sup>2</sup> *Text*: baleis, to-bete . . . to-wetc.

<sup>4</sup> Necessary.

<sup>6</sup> Certainly.

*In the honour of Christës birth,  
Sing we all with joy and mirth<sup>1</sup>*

1521.

In this time of Christmas,  
Betwixt an ox and an ass,  
A maiden delivered was  
Of Christ, her dear Son dear.

The husband of Mary  
[Saint] Joseph stood her by,  
And said he was ready  
To serve her if need were.

When she her dear Son see,  
She set Him on her knee,  
And sang, "Hither to me,  
Come buss Thy mother dear."

On her lap she Him laid,  
And with her pap He played,  
And ever sang the maid:  
"Come buss Thy mother dear."

With lips culling [His],  
His mouth oft she did kiss,  
And said: "Sweetheart mine,  
I pray You, make good cheer."

To this Child let us pray,  
That born was on this day,  
Of Mary, the mild may,  
To grant us all good cheer.

<sup>1</sup> *Christmasse Carolles* (Wynkyn de Worde).

*Now sing we with angelis :  
Gloria in excelsis*

Before 1536.

A BABE is born, to bliss us bring.  
I heard a maid lullay and sing ;  
She said : " Dear Son, leave Thy weeping,  
Thy Father is the King of bliss."

*Now sing we with angelis :  
Gloria in excelsis !*

" Lullay," she said, and sang also,  
" Mine own dear Son, why art Thou woe ?  
Have I not done as I should do ?

Thy grievance, tell me what it is."

*Now sing we with angelis :  
Gloria in excelsis !*

" Nay, mother, for thee weep I nought,  
But for the woe that shall be wrought  
To me, ere I mankind have bought.

Was never sorrow like it, ywis."

*Now sing we with angelis :  
Gloria in excelsis !*

" Peace, dear Son, tell me not so,  
Thou art my child, I have no mo ;  
Should I see men my own son slo<sup>1</sup> ?  
Alas, my dear Son, what meaneth this ? "

*Now sing we with angelis :  
Gloria in excelsis !*

<sup>1</sup> Slay.

“ My hands, mother, that ye may see,  
 Shall be nailed unto a tree ;  
 My feet all so fast shall be ;  
 Men shall weep that shall see this.”

*Now sing we with angelis :*  
*Gloria in excelsis !*

“ Ah, dear Son ! hard is my hap,  
 To see my child that sucked my pap,  
 His hands, His feet, that I did wrap,  
 Be so nailed, that never did amiss.”

*Now sing we with angelis :*  
*Gloria in excelsis !*

“ Ah, dear mother ! yet shall a spear  
 My heart in sunder all to-tear ;  
 No wonder, if I careful <sup>1</sup> were,  
 And weep full sore to think on this.”

*Now sing we with angelis :*  
*Gloria in excelsis !*

“ Ah, dear Son, shall I see this ?  
 Thou art my child, and I thy mother, ywis,  
 When Gabriel called me ‘ full of grace,’  
 He told me nothing of this.”

*Now sing we with angelis :*  
*Gloria in excelsis !*

“ Ah, dear mother ! through mine hair  
 To thrust in thorns they will not spare ;  
 Alas, mother ! I am full of care,  
 That ye shall see this heaviness.”

*Now sing we with angelis :*  
*Gloria in excelsis !*

<sup>1</sup> Sorrowful.

“ Ah, dear Son, leave thy weeping !  
 Thou bringest my heart in great mourning ;  
 A careful song now may I sing ;  
 This tidings, hard to me it is.”  
*Now sing we with angelis :*  
*Gloria in excelsis !*

“ Ah ! peace, dear mother, I thee pray,  
 Comfort me all that ye may,  
 And sing, ‘ by-by, lullay, lullay,’  
 To put away all heaviness.”  
*Now sing we with angelis :*  
*Gloria in excelsis !*

*Lullay, Jesu, lullay, lullay !*  
*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay*

Before 1536.

So blessed a sight it was to see,  
 How Mary rocked her Son so free ;  
 So fair she rocked and sang “ by-by.”  
*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay !*  
*Lullay, Jesu, lullay, lullay !*  
*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay !*

“ Mine own dear Son, why weepest Thou thus ?  
 Is not Thy father King of bliss ?  
 Have I not done that in me is ?  
 Your grievance, tell me what it is.”  
*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay !*  
*Lullay, Jesu, lullay, lullay !*  
*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay !*

“ Therefore, mother, weep I nought,  
But for the woe that shall be wrought  
To me, ere I mankind have bought.

*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay !*

*Lullay, Jesu, lullay, lullay !*

*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay !*

“ Mother, the timē ye shall see  
Th[at] sorrow shall break your heart in three,  
So foul the Jews shall fare with me.

*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay !*

*Lullay, Jesu, lullay, lullay !*

*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay !*

“ When I am naked, they will me take,  
And fast bind me to a stake,  
And beat me sore for man his sake.

*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay !*

*Lullay, Jesu, lullay, lullay !*

*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay !*

“ Upon the Cross they shall me cast,  
Hand and foot, nail me fast ;  
Yet gall shall be my drink at last ;  
Thus shall my life pass away.

*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay !*

*Lullay, Jesu, lullay, lullay !*

*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay !*

“ Ah, dear mother ! yet shall a spear  
My heart in sunder all to-tear ;  
No wonder though I careful were.

*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay !*

*Lullay, Jesu, lullay, lullay !*

*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay !*



" Now, dear mother, sing lullay,  
 And put away all heaviness ;  
 Into this world I took the way,  
 Again to [heaven] I shall me dress,  
 Where joy is without end ay,  
*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay ! "*  
*Lullay, Jesu, lullay, lullay !*  
*Mine own dear mother, sing lullay !*

*Lullay, Lullay, Thou Little Tiny Child*<sup>1</sup>

1534.

*Lullay, lullay, Thou little tiny Child,*  
*By-by, lullay, lullay,*  
*By-by, lullay, lullay.*

O SISTERS two  
 How may we do  
 For to preserve this day  
 This poor youngling,  
 For whom we do sing  
 By-by, lullay, lullay ?

Herod the King,  
 In his raging,  
 Charged he hath this day  
 His men of might  
 In his own sight  
 All young children to slay.

<sup>1</sup> *Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors, Coventry Corpus Christi Plays.*

That woe is me,  
 Poor Child, for Thee  
 And ever moan, and may  
 For Thy parting,  
 Neither say nor sing  
 By-by, lullay, lullay.

*An Old Carol, with Lullaby*<sup>1</sup>

1575.

My sweet little Baby, what meanest Thou to cry?  
 Be still, my blessed Babe, though cause Thou hast to mourn,  
 Whose blood most innocent to shed the cruel king hath  
 sworn;

And lo, alas! behold what slaughter he doth make,  
 Shedding the blood of infants all, sweet Saviour, for Thy  
 sake.

A King, a King is born, they say, which King this king would  
 kill.

*O woe and woeful heavy day when wretches have their will!*  
*Lulla, la-lulla, lulla, lullaby.*

Three kings this King of kings to see are come from far,  
 To each unknown, with offerings great, by guiding of a  
 star;

And shepherds heard the song which angels bright did  
 sing.

Giving all glory unto God for coming of this King,  
 Which must be made away—King Herod would Him kill.

*O woe and woeful heavy day when wretches have their will!*  
*Lulla, la-lulla, lulla, lullaby.*

<sup>1</sup> Byrd's *Psalmes, Songs and Sonets, etc.*

Lo, lo, my little Babe, be still, lament no more ;  
 From fury Thou shalt step aside, help have we still in store ;  
 We heavenly warning have some other soil to seek ;  
 From death must fly the Lord of life, as lamb both mild and  
     meek ;  
 Thus must my Babe obey the king that would Him kill.  
*O woe and woeful heavy day when wretches have their will !*  
*Lulla, la-lulla, lulla, lullaby.*

But Thou shalt live and reign, as sibyls hath foresaid,  
 As all the prophets prophesy, whose mother, yet a maid  
 And perfect virgin pure, with her breasts shall upbreed  
 Both God and man that all hath made, the Son of heavenly  
     seed,  
 Whom caitiffs none can 'tray, whom tyrants none can kill.  
*O joy and joyful happy day when wretches want their will !*  
*Lulla, la-lulla, lulla, lullaby !*

*Shall I, mother, shall I, shall I do so ?<sup>1</sup>*  
*Shall I die for man his sake,*  
*And I never sinned thereto ?*

Before 1536.

I was born in a stall  
 Between beastës two,  
 To this world brought in thrall,  
 To live in care and woe.  
*Shall I, mother, shall I, shall I do so ?*  
*Shall I die for man his sake,*  
*And I never sinned thereto ?*

<sup>1</sup> See note.

When I was eight days old,  
 The law fulfilled I tho,<sup>1</sup>  
 Circumcised as a child ;  
 Then began all my woe.  
*Shall I, mother, shall I, shall I do so ?*  
*Shall I die for man his sake,*  
*And I never sinned thereto ?*

Though my Father be a king,  
 Myself I went him fro,  
 Into this world to suffer many a thing—  
 See, man, what thou hast do !<sup>2</sup>  
*Shall I, mother, shall I, shall I do so ?*  
*Shall I die for man his sake,*  
*And I never sinned thereto ?*

Man, I am thy friend ay ;  
 Thyself art thy foe ;  
 To my Father look thou pray,  
 And leave thy sins that thou hast do.  
*Shall I, mother, shall I, shall I do so ?*  
*Shall I die for man his sake,*  
*And I never sinned thereto ?*

The Jews were so fell,  
 That to Judas could they go ;  
 They kissed me, as I you tell,  
 “Hail, king !” said they tho.  
*Shall I, mother, shall I, shall I do so ?*  
*Shall I die for man his sake,*  
*And I never sinned thereto ?*

<sup>1</sup> Then.<sup>2</sup> Done.

They bound me to a pillar anon,  
 Hand and foot, both two ;  
 They scourgèd me with scourges soon ;  
 The blood ran my body fro.  
*Shall I, mother, shall I, shall I do so ?*  
*Shall I die for man his sake,*  
*And I never sinned thereto ?*

They clothed me in a mantel red,  
 From the top to the toe,  
 With a crown of thorn on my head ;  
 With staves they beat it thereto.  
*Shall I, mother, shall I, shall I do so ?*  
*Shall I die for man his sake,*  
*And I never sinned thereto ?*

They brought me into Caiaphas' hall,  
 Where he was bishop tho ;  
 False witness on me they 'gan call.  
 Mother, what shall I do ?  
*Shall I, mother, shall I, shall I do so ?*  
*Shall I die for man his sake,*  
*And I never sinned thereto ?*

I took the Cross on my back full still ;  
 To Calvary then must I go ;  
 I set it down upon an hill,  
 With other crosses mo.  
*Shall I, mother, shall I, shall I do so ?*  
*Shall I die for man his sake,*  
*And I never sinned thereto ?*

They hanged me up [in] that tide ;  
 Hands and feet they nailed also ;  
 And a thief on every side,  
 To liken my body to.  
*Shall I, mother, shall I, shall I do so ?*  
*Shall I die for man his sake,*  
*And I never sinned thereto ?*

With a spear both sharp and keen  
 They clave my heart in two ;  
 Water and blood thereout ran—  
 See, man, what thou hast do !  
*Shall I, mother, shall I, shall I do so ?*  
*Shall I die for man his sake,*  
*And I never sinned thereto ?*

With a spear both sharp and good  
 They clave my heart in three,  
 Then yielded I up the ghost and died,  
 That here all men may see.  
*Shall I, mother, shall I, shall I do so ?*  
*Shall I die for man his sake,*  
*And I never sinned thereto ?*

God that died on the Rood,  
 And spread His arms in the East,  
 Send us all His blessing,  
 And send us all good rest !  
*Shall I, mother, shall I, shall I do so ?*  
*Shall I die for man his sake,*  
*And I never sinned thereto ?*

*Ane Sang of the Birth of Christ, with the  
tune of Baw Lulalaw<sup>1</sup>*

About 1567.

I COME from heaven to tell  
The best nowells that ever befell ;  
To you thir tidings true I bring,  
And I will of them say and sing.

This day to you is born ane child,  
Of Mary meek and virgin mild ;  
That blessed bairn, benign and kind,  
Sall you rejoice, baith heart and mind.

It is the Lord Christ, God and man,  
He will do for you what He can ;  
Himself your Saviour He will be,  
Fra sin and hell to make you free.

He is our richt salvation  
From everlasting damnation,  
That ye may sing in glory and bliss  
For ever mair in heaven with His.

Ye sall Him find but <sup>2</sup> mark or wring,<sup>3</sup>  
Full simple in ane crib lying ;  
So lies He whilk you has wrocht,  
And all this warld made of noch

<sup>1</sup> *Ane Compendious Buik of Godlie Psalmes and Spirituall Sangis*,  
cf. note on p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> Without.

<sup>3</sup> Defect

Let us rejoice and be blithe,  
 And with the herds go full swithe,<sup>1</sup>  
 And see what God of His grace has done,  
 Through Christ to bring us to His throne.

My soul and life, stand up and see  
 Wha lies in ane crib of tree.  
 What babe is that so gude and fair ?  
 It is Christ, God's Son and Heir.

Welcome now, gracious God of micht,  
 To sinners vile, puir and unricht ;  
 Thou came to save us from distress ;  
 How can we thank Thy gentleness ?

O God that made all creature,  
 How art Thou become so puir,  
 That on the hay and stray<sup>2</sup> will lie,  
 Amang the asses, oxen and kye ?

And were the warld ten times so wide,  
 Clad over with gold and stanes of pride,  
 Unworthy yet it were to Thee,  
 Under Thy feet ane stool to be.

The silk and sandal,<sup>3</sup> Thee to ease,  
 Are hay and simple swaddling claes,  
 Wherein Thou glories, greatest King,  
 As Thou in heaven were in thy ring.

Thou took like pains temporal,  
 To make me rich perpetual ;  
 For all this world's wealth and gude  
 Can nothing richt Thy celsitude.

<sup>1</sup> Quickly.

<sup>2</sup> Straw.

<sup>3</sup> Thin silken stuff.



O my dear heart, young Jesus sweet,  
 Prepare Thy cradle in my sprite,  
 And I sall rock Thee in my heart,  
 And never mair from Thee depart.

But I sall praise Thee evermore,  
 With sangës sweet unto Thy glory;  
 The knees of my heart sall I bow,  
 And sing that richt *Balulalow*.

Glory be to God eternally,  
 Whilk gave His only Son for me,  
 The angels' joys for to hear,  
 The gracious gift of this New Year.

### *The Holy Well*<sup>1</sup>

Traditional.

As it fell out one May morning,  
 And upon one bright holiday,  
 Sweet Jesus asked of His dear mother,  
 If He might go to play.

“To play, to play, sweet Jesus shall go,  
 And to play pray get you gone,  
 And let me hear of no complaint,  
 At night when you come home.”

Sweet Jesus went down to yonder town,  
 As far as the Holy Well,  
 And there did see as fine children  
 As any tongue can tell.

<sup>1</sup> See note.

He said, " God bless you every one,  
And your bodies Christ save and see ;  
Little children, shall I play with you,  
And you shall play with me ? "

But they made answer to him, " No ! "  
They were lords' and ladies' sons ;  
And He, the meanest of them all,  
Was but a maiden's child, born in an ox's stall.

Sweet Jesus turned him around,  
And He neither laughed nor smiled,  
But the tears came trickling from His eyes,  
Like water from the skies.

Sweet Jesus turned Him about,  
To his mother's dear home went He,  
And said, " I have been in yonder town,  
As far as you can see.

" I have been down in yonder town,  
As far as the Holy Well,  
There did I meet as fine children  
As any tongue can tell.

" I bid God bless them every one,  
And their bodies Christ save and see ;  
Little children, shall I play with you,  
And you shall play with me ?

" But they made answer to me, ' No ! '  
They were lords' and ladies' sons,  
And I, the meanest of them all,  
Was but a maiden's child, born in an ox's stall."

“ Though you are but a maiden’s child,  
 Born in an ox’s stall,  
 Thou art the Christ, the King of heaven,  
 And the Saviour of them all.

“ Sweet Jesus, go down to yonder town,  
 As far as the Holy Well,  
 And take away those sinful souls  
 And dip them deep in hell.”

“ Nay, nay,” sweet Jesus said,  
 “ Nay, nay, that may not be,  
 For there are too many sinful souls  
 Crying out for the help of me.”

(O then spoke the Angel Gabriel,  
 Upon one good Saint Stephen,  
 “ Although you’re but a maiden’s child,  
 You are the King of heaven.”)<sup>1</sup>

### *The Bitter Withy*<sup>2</sup>

Traditional.

“ As it fell out on a holy day,  
 The drops of rain did fall, did fall,  
 Our Saviour asked leave of His mother, Mary,  
 If He might go play at ball.

“ To play at ball, my own dear Son,  
 It’s time you was going or gone,  
 But be sure let me hear no complaint of you,  
 At night when you do come home.”

<sup>1</sup> This stanza is sometimes omitted.

<sup>2</sup> See note.

It was upling scorn and downling scorn !  
 Oh, there He met three jolly jerdins :<sup>1</sup>  
 Oh, there He asked the three jolly jerdins  
 If they would go play at ball.

“ Oh, we are lords’ and ladies’ sons,  
 Born in bower or in hall.”  
 “ Then at the very last I’ll make it appear  
 That I am above you all.”

Our Saviour built a bridge with the beams of the sun,  
 And over He gone, He gone He ;  
 And after followed the three jolly jerdins,  
 And drowneded they were all three.

It was upling scorn and downling scorn !  
 The mothers of them did whoop and call,  
 Crying out : “ Mary mild, call home your child,  
 For ours are drowneded all ! ”

Mary mild, Mary mild called home her Child,  
 And laid our Saviour across her knee,  
 And with a whole handful of bitter withy  
 She gave Him slashes three.

Then He says to His mother : “ Oh, the withy ! oh, the  
 withy !  
 The bitter withy that causes me to smart, to smart,  
 Oh, the withy, it shall be the very first tree  
 That perishes at the heart ! ”

<sup>1</sup> Virgins? See note.

*The Cherry-Tree Carol*<sup>1</sup>

Traditional.

## I

JOSEPH was an old man,  
And an old man was he,  
When he wedded Mary  
In the land of Galilee.

Joseph and Mary walked  
Through an orchard good,  
Where was cherries and berries  
So red as any blood.

Joseph and Mary walked  
Through an orchard green,  
Where was berries and cherries  
As thick as might be seen.

O then bespoke Mary,  
So meek and so mild,  
“Pluck me one cherry, Joseph,  
For I am with child.”

O then bespoke Joseph,  
With words most unkind,  
“Let him pluck thee a cherry  
That brought thee with child.”

O then bespoke the Babe  
Within His mother's womb—  
“Bow down then the tallest tree  
For my mother to have some.”

<sup>1</sup> See note.

Then bowed down the highest tree,  
Unto His mother's hand.  
Then she cried, "See, Joseph,  
I have cherries at command."

O then bespake Joseph—  
"I have done Mary wrong ;  
But cheer up, my dearest,  
And be not cast down.

"O eat your cherries, Mary,  
O eat your cherries now,  
O eat your cherries, Mary,  
That grow upon the bough."

Then Mary plucked a cherry,  
As red as the blood ;  
Then Mary went home  
With her heavy load.

## II

As Joseph was a-walking  
He heard an angel sing :  
"This night shall be born  
Our heavenly King ;

"He neither shall be born  
In housen or in hall,  
Nor in the place of Paradise,  
But in an ox's stall.

## CAROLS OF THE NATIVITY

“He neither shall be clothed  
 In purple or in pall,  
 But all in fair linen  
 As were babies <sup>1</sup> all.

“He neither shall be rocked  
 In silver nor in gold,  
 But in a wooden cradle  
 That rocks on the mould.

“He neither shall be christened  
 In white wine nor red,  
 But with fair spring water  
 With which we were christenēd.”

## III

Then Mary took her young Son,  
 And set Him on her knee :

“I pray Thee now, dear Child,  
 Tell how this world shall be.”

“O I shall be as dead, mother,  
 As the stones in the wall ;  
 O the stones in the streets, mother,  
 Shall mourn for me all.

“Upon Easter-day, mother,  
 My uprising shall be ;  
 O the sun and the moon, mother,  
 Shall both rise with me.”

<sup>1</sup> *Or* men.

*The Carnal<sup>1</sup> and the Crane*

Traditional.

As I passed by a river-side,  
 And there as I did rein,<sup>2</sup>  
 In argument I chanced to hear  
 A carnal and a crane.

The carnal said unto the crane,  
 " If all the world should turn,  
 Before we had the Father,  
 But now we have the Son.

" From whence does the Son come ?  
 From where and from what place ? "  
 He said : " In a manger,  
 Between an ox and ass."

" I pray thee," said the carnal,  
 " Tell me before thou go,  
 Was not the mother of Jesus  
 Conceived by the Holy Ghost ? "

" She was the purest virgin,  
 And the cleanest from sin ;  
 She was the handmaid of our Lord,  
 And mother of our King."

" Where is the golden cradle  
 That Christ was rocked in ?  
 Where are the silken sheets  
 That Jesus was wrapt in ? "

1 Crow. See note.

2 Run.



“ A manger was the cradle  
 That Christ was rocked in,  
 The provender the asses left,  
 So sweetly he slept on.

“ There was a star in the west land,  
 So bright it did appear,  
 Into King Herod’s chamber,  
 And where King Herod were.

“ The Wise Men soon espied it,  
 And told the King on high,  
 A princely babe was born that night  
 No king could e’er destroy.

“ ‘ If this be true,’ King Herod said,  
 ‘ As thou tellest unto me,  
 This roasted cock that lies in the dish  
 Shall crow full fences<sup>1</sup> three.’<sup>2</sup>

“ The cock soon freshly feathered was,  
 By the work of God’s own hand,  
 And then three fences crowed he,  
 In the dish where he did stand.

“ ‘ Rise up, rise up, you merry men all,  
 See that you ready be,  
 All children under two years old  
 Now slain they all shall be.’

“ Then Jesus, ah ! and Joseph,  
 And Mary that was so pure,  
 They travelled into Egypt,  
 As you shall find it sure.

<sup>1</sup> Rounds.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Saint Stephen was a Clerk*, p. 123.

“ And when they came to Egypt’s land,  
Amongst those fierce wild beasts,  
Mary, she being weary,  
Must needs sit down to rest.

“ ‘ Come sit thee down,’ says Jesus,  
‘ Come sit thee down by me,  
And thou shalt see how these wild beasts  
Do come and worship me.’

“ First came the lovely lion,  
Which Jesu’s grace did spring,  
And of the wild beasts in the field,  
The lion shall be the king.

“ We’ll choose our virtuous princes,  
Of birth and high degree,  
In every sundry nation,  
Where’er we come and see.

“ Then Jesus, ah ! and Joseph,  
And Mary that was unknown,  
They travelled by a husbandman,  
Just while his seed was sown.

“ ‘ God speed thee, man ! ’ said Jesus,  
‘ Go fetch thy ox and wain,  
And carry home thy corn again,  
Which thou this day hast sown.’

“ The husbandman fell on his knees,  
Even before His face ;  
‘ Long time hast Thou been looked for,  
But now Thou art come at last.

## CAROLS OF THE NATIVITY

“ ‘ And I myself do now believe,  
Thy name is Jesus called ;  
Redeemer of mankind Thou art,  
Though undeserving all.’

“ ‘ The truth, man, thou hast spoken,  
Of it thou mayst be sure,  
For I must lose my precious blood  
For thee and thousands more.

“ ‘ If any should come this way,  
And enquire for me alone,  
Tell them that Jesus passed by,  
As thou thy seed did sow.’

“ ‘ After that there came King Herod,  
With his train so furiously,  
Enquiring of the husbandman,  
Whether Jesus passed by.

“ ‘ Why, the truth it must be spoke,  
And the truth it must be known,  
For Jesus passed by this way,  
When my seed was sown.

“ ‘ But now I have it reapen,  
And some laid on my wain,  
Ready to fetch and carry  
Into my barn again.’”

“ ‘ Turn back,’ says the Captain,  
‘ Your labour and mine’s in vain,  
It’s full three-quarters of a year  
Since he his seed has sown.’

“So Herod was deceived  
By the work of God’s own hand,  
And further He proceeded  
Into the Holy Land.

“There’s thousands of children young,  
Which for His sake did die ;  
Do not forbid those little ones,  
And do not them deny.

“The truth now I have spoken,  
And the truth now I have shown ;  
Even the blessed Virgin,  
She’s now brought forth a Son.”

## GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO<sup>1</sup>

### *Hail, Comely and Clean<sup>2</sup>*

*I. Pastor.* HAIL, comely and clean! hail, young Child!  
Hail, Maker, as I mean, of a maiden so mild,  
Thou has worried, I ween, the warlock<sup>3</sup> so wild;  
The false guiler of teen, now goes he beguiled.

Lo, He merries;  
Lo, He laughs, my sweeting,  
A well fair meeting!  
I have holden my heting.<sup>4</sup>  
Have a bob of cherries!

*II. Pastor.* Hail, suffering Saviour, for Thou has us sought!  
Hail, freely fode and flower that all thing hath wrought!  
Hail, full of favour, that made all of nought!  
Hail! I kneel and I cower. A bird have I brought  
To my bairn.

Hail, little tiny mop!<sup>5</sup>  
Of our creed Thou art crop;<sup>6</sup>  
I would drink on Thy cop,<sup>7</sup>  
Little day-starn!<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> *Secunda Pastorum, Towneley Plays.*

<sup>3</sup> Wizard, here applied to the devil.

<sup>5</sup> Child.

<sup>6</sup> Head.

<sup>7</sup> Cup.

<sup>4</sup> Promise.

<sup>8</sup> Star.



**D**eus Advenam.  
 in adiutorium  
 meum intende.  
 Domine ad adiuuandum

Comment l'ange de paradis annonce au pastoureur la naissance de nostre Seigneur Ihesus  
 Comment les pastoureaux en font grand ioy et regardent courre moure come heliers menant leur

*Puer natus est.*



*III. Pastor.* Hail, darling dear, full of godhead !  
 I pray Thee be near, when that I have need.  
 Hail ! sweet is Thy cheer ! My heart would bleed  
 To see Thee sit here in so poor weed,  
     With no pennies.  
 Hail ! put forth Thy dall !<sup>1</sup>  
 I bring Thee but a ball,  
 Have and play Thee withal,  
     And go to the tennis.

*Maria.* The Father of heaven, God Omnipotent,  
 That set all on seven,<sup>2</sup> His Son has He sent.  
 My name could He neven,<sup>3</sup> and light<sup>4</sup> ere He went.  
 I conceived Him full even, through might as He meant ;  
     And now He is born.  
 He keep you from woe !  
 I shall pray Him so.  
 Tell forth as ye go,  
     And mind on this morn.

*Tyrle, tyrlow, tyrle, tyrlow,  
 So merrily the shepherds began to blow*<sup>5</sup>

Before 1536.

ABOUT the field they pip'd right,  
 So merrily the shepherds began to blow ;  
 Adown from heaven that is so high—  
     *Tyrle, tyrlow, [tyrle, tyrlow] !*

<sup>1</sup> Hand.

<sup>2</sup> Name.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. following carol.

<sup>4</sup> Created all things in seven days.

<sup>5</sup> Alighted.



Of angels there came a company,  
 With merry songs and melody.  
 The shepherds anon gan them aspy.<sup>1</sup>  
*Tyrle, tyrlow, [tyrle, tyrlow]!*

*Gloria in excelsis*, the angels sang,  
 And said that peace was present among,  
 To every man that to the faith would fong.<sup>2</sup>  
*Tyrle, tyrlow, tyrle, tyrlow!*

The shepherds hied them to Bethlehem,  
 To see that blessed sun His beam;  
 And there they found that glorious stream.<sup>3</sup>  
*Tyrle, tyrlow, tyrle, tyrlow!*

Now pray we to that mekē Child,  
 And to His mother that is so mild,  
 The which was never defiled,  
*Tyrle, tyrlow, [tyrle, tyrlow]!*

That we may come unto His bliss,  
 Where joy shall never miss,  
 Then may we sing in Paradise:  
*Tyrle, tyrlow, [tyrle, tyrlow]!*

I pray you all that be here,  
 For to sing and make good cheer,  
 In the worship of God this year.  
*Tyrle, tyrlow, [tyrle, tyrlow]!*

<sup>1</sup> Began to see them.

<sup>3</sup> star, or lome=light.

<sup>2</sup> Accept.

*As I Out Rode This Enders Night*<sup>1</sup>

1534.

As I out rode this enders night,  
 Of three jolly shepherds I saw a sight,  
 And all about their fold a star shone bright ;  
     *They sang terly terlow ;*  
     *So merrily the shepherds their pipes gan blow.*

Down from heaven, from heaven so high,  
 Of angels there came a great company,  
 With mirth and joy and great solemnity,  
     *They sang terly terlow ;*  
     *So merrily the shepherds their pipes gan blow.*

*The Jolly Shepherd Wat*<sup>2</sup>

Before 1536.

*Can I not sing but hoy,*  
*When the jolly shepherd made so much joy.*

THE shepherd upon a hill he sat,  
 He had on him his tabard<sup>3</sup> and his hat,  
 His tar-box, his pipe and his flagat ;<sup>4</sup>  
 His name was called jolly, jolly Wat ;  
 For he was a good herd's boy,  
     *Ut hoy !*

*For in his pipe he made so much joy.*  
*Can I not sing but hoy,*  
*When the jolly shepherd made so much joy.*

<sup>1</sup> Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors, Coventry Corpus Christi Plays. See note.   <sup>2</sup> See note.   <sup>3</sup> Short coat.   <sup>4</sup> Bottle.

The shepherd upon a hill was laid,  
 His dog to his girdle was tied ;  
 He had not slept but a little braid,<sup>1</sup>  
 But " *Gloria in excelsis* " was to him said.

*Ut hoy !*

*For in his pipe he made so much joy.*

*Can I not sing but hoy,*

*When the jolly shepherd made so much joy.*

The shepherd on a hill he stood,  
 Round about him his sheep they yode ;<sup>2</sup>  
 He put his hand under his hood,  
 He saw a star as red as blood.

*Ut hoy !*

*For in his pipe he made so much joy.*

*Can I not sing but hoy,*

*When the jolly shepherd made so much joy.*

" Now farewell Mall and also Will,  
 For my love, go ye all still  
 Unto<sup>3</sup> I come again you till,<sup>3</sup>  
 And evermore, Will, ring well thy bell."

*Ut hoy !*

*For in his pipe he made so much joy.*

*Can I not sing but hoy,*

*When the jolly shepherd made so much joy.*

" Now must I go where Christ was born ;  
 Farewell ! I come again to-morn.  
 Dog, keep well my sheep from the corn,  
 And warn well Warrock when I blow my horn."

<sup>1</sup> Time.

<sup>2</sup> Went.

<sup>3</sup> Until . . . to.

*Ut hoy!*

*For in his pipe he made so much joy.*

*Can I not sing but hoy,*

*When the jolly shepherd made so much joy.*

When Wat to Bethlehem comē was,  
He sweat; he had gone faster than a pace;  
He found Jesus in a simple place,  
Between an ox and an ass.

*Ut hoy!*

*For in his pipe he made so much joy.*

*Can I not sing but hoy,*

*When the jolly shepherd made so much joy.*

The shepherd said anon right:  
“I will go see yon ferly<sup>1</sup> sight,  
Whereas the angel singeth on height,  
And the star that shineth so bright.”

*Ut hoy!*

*For in his pipe he made so much joy.*

*Can I not sing but hoy,*

*When the jolly shepherd made so much joy.*

“Jesu! I offer to Thee here my pipe,  
My scrip, my tar-box, and my skirt;  
Home to my fellows now will I skip,  
And also look unto my sheep.”

*Ut hoy!*

*For in his pipe he made so much joy.*

*Can I not sing but hoy,*

*When the jolly shepherd made so much joy.*

<sup>1</sup> Strange.

“ Now farewell, my own herdsman Wat ! ”  
 “ Yea, for God, Lady, even so I hight ; <sup>1</sup>  
 Lull well Jesu in thy lap,  
 And farewell, Joseph, with thy round cape ! ”  
*Ut hoy !*

*For in his pipe he made so much joy.  
 Can I not sing but hoy,  
 When the jolly shepherd made so much joy.*

“ Now may I well both hope and sing,  
 For I have been at Christ’s bearing ;  
 Home to my fellows now will I fling ;  
 Christ of heaven to His bliss us bring ! ”  
*Ut hoy !*

*For in his pipe he made so much joy.  
 Can I not sing but hoy,  
 When the jolly shepherd made so much joy.*

*Man, move thy mind, and joy this feast,  
 Veritas de terra orta est*

Before 1536.

As I came by the way,  
 I saw a sight seemly to see,  
 The shepherds ranging in array,  
 Upon the fold keeping their fee.<sup>2</sup>  
 A star they said they did espy  
 Casting the beams out of the East,  
 And angels making melody :  
 “ *Veritas de terra orta est.* ”

<sup>1</sup> Am called.

<sup>2</sup> Beasts.

Upon that sight they were aghast,  
 Saying these words as I say thee ·  
 “ To Bethlehem shortly let us haste  
 And there we shall the truth see.”  
 The angel said unto them all three  
 To their comfort, ere ever he ceased :  
 “ *Consolamini*, and merry be ;  
*Veritas de terra orta est.*”

From heaven, out of the highest see,  
 Righteousness hath taken the way,  
 With mercy meddled<sup>1</sup> plenteously,  
 And so conceived in a may ;  
*Miranda res*, this is, in fay,<sup>2</sup>  
 So sayeth the prophet in his gest.<sup>3</sup>  
 Now is He born, Scripture doth say ;  
*Veritas de terra orta est.*

Then passed the shepherds from that place  
 And followed by the star's beam,  
 That was so bright afore their face,  
 It brought them straight unto Bethlehem ;  
 So bright it shone over all the realm  
 Till they came there they would not rest,  
 To Jewry and Jerusalem ;  
*Veritas de terra orta est.*

<sup>1</sup> Mingled.

<sup>2</sup> Faith.

<sup>3</sup> Story.

*In Bethlehem, that Noble Place*<sup>1</sup>

1546-52.

IN Bethlehem, that noble place,  
 As by prophecy said it was,  
 Of the Virgin Mary full of grace,  
*Salvator mundi natus est.*

*Be we merry in this feast,  
 In quo Salvator natus est.*

On Christmas night, an angel it told  
 To the shepherds keeping their fold,  
 That into Bethlehem with beastës would,  
*Salvator mundi natus est.*

*Be we merry in this feast,  
 In quo Salvator natus est.*

The shepherds were [en]compassed right,  
 About them was a great light ;  
 "Dread ye naught," said the angel bright,  
*Salvator mundi natus est."*

*Be we merry in this feast,  
 In quo Salvator natus est.*

"Behold, to you we bring great joy.  
 For why? Jesus is born this day ;  
 To us, of Mary, that mild may,  
*Salvator mundi natus est."*

*Be we merry in this feast,  
 In quo Salvator natus est.*

<sup>1</sup> Richard Kele's *Christmas Carols*.

And thus in faith find it ye shall,  
 Lying poorly in an ox-stall.  
 The shepherds then lauded God all,  
*Quia Salvator mundi natus est.*  
*Be we merry in this feast,*  
*In quo Salvator natus est.*

*God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen*

Traditional.

God rest you merry, gentlemen,  
 Let nothing you dismay,  
 For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
 Was born upon this day,  
 To save us all from Satan's power  
 When we were gone astray.  
*O tidings of comfort and joy,*  
*For Jesus Christ our Saviour was born on*  
*Christmas Day.*

In Bethlehem in Jewry  
 This blessed babe was born,  
 And laid within a manger  
 Upon this blessed morn;  
 The which His mother Mary  
 Nothing did take in scorn.  
*O tidings of comfort and joy,*  
*For Jesus Christ our Saviour was born on*  
*Christmas Day.*

From God our heavenly Father  
 A blessed angel came,



And unto certain shepherds  
 Brought tidings of the same,  
 How that in Bethlehem was born  
 The Son of God by name.  
*O tidings of comfort and joy,  
 For Jesus Christ our Saviour was born on  
 Christmas Day.*

“Fear not,” then said the angel,  
 “Let nothing you affright,  
 This day is born a Saviour  
 Of virtue, power, and might ;  
 So frequently to vanquish all  
 The friends of Satan quite.”  
*O tidings of comfort and joy,  
 For Jesus Christ our Saviour was born on  
 Christmas Day.*

The shepherds at those tidings  
 Rejoicèd much in mind,  
 And left their flocks a-feeding  
 In tempest, storm, and wind,  
 And went to Bethlehem straightway,  
 This blessed Babe to find.  
*O tidings of comfort and joy,  
 For Jesus Christ our Saviour was born on  
 Christmas Day.*

But when to Bethlehem they came,  
 Whereas this Infant lay,

They found Him in a manger  
 Where oxen feed on hay ;  
 His mother Mary kneeling  
 Unto the Lord did pray.  
*O tidings of comfort and joy,  
 For Jesus Christ our Saviour was born on  
 Christmas Day.*

Now to the Lord sing praises,  
 All you within this place,  
 And with true love and brotherhood  
 Each other now embrace ;  
 This holy tide of Christmas  
 All others doth deface.  
*O tidings of comfort and joy.  
 For Jesus Christ our Saviour was born on  
 Christmas Day.*

### *The Shepherd's Song*

A CAROL OR HYMN FOR CHRISTMAS

1600.

Edmund Bolton.<sup>1</sup>

SWEET music, sweeter far  
 Than any song is sweet,  
 Sweet music, heavenly rare,  
 Mine ears, O peers, doth greet.  
 You gentle flocks, whose fleeces, pearled with dew,  
 Resemble heaven, whom golden drops make bright,

<sup>1</sup> *England's Helicon.*

Listen, O listen, now, O not to you  
 Our pipes make sport to shorten weary night ;  
 But voices most divine  
 Make blissful harmony,  
 Voices that seem to shine,—  
 For what else clears the sky ?  
 Tunes can we hear, but not the singers see,  
 The tunes divine, and so the singers be.

Lo, how the firmament  
 Within an azure fold  
 The flock of stars hath pent,  
 That we might these behold.  
 Yet from their beams proceedeth not this light,  
 Nor can their crystals such reflection give.  
 What there doth make the element so bright ?  
 The heavens are come down upon earth to live.  
 But hearken to the song.  
 “Glory to glory’s King,  
 And peace all men among,”  
 These choristers do sing.  
 Angels they are, as also (shepherds) be  
 Whom in our fear we do admire to see.

“Let not amazement blind  
 Your souls,” said he, “annoy ;  
 To you and all mankind  
 My message bringeth joy,  
 For lo, the world’s great Shepherd now is born,  
 A blessed babe, an infant full of power ;  
 After long night uprisen is the morn,  
 Renowing Bethlehem in the Saviour.”

Sprung is the perfect day,  
 By prophets seen afar ;  
 Sprung is the mirthful May,  
 Which winter cannot mar.  
 In David's city doth this Sun appear  
 Clouded in flesh, yet, shepherds, sit we here ?

*I Heard a Mess of Merry Shepherds*<sup>1</sup>

About 1611.

I HEARD a mess of merry shepherds sing  
 A joyful song full of sweet delight ;  
 Their ditty was how that a King  
 In Bethlehem was born that night,  
 Whose mother was a virgin (fair and) bright,  
 And Mary hight her blessed name,  
 A queen of fame  
 Who for the fault of Adam's sin  
 Was brought abed even in an inn.  
 A joyful news let us rejoice,  
 With heart and voice ;  
 Yet how can we but weep alas,  
 To see between an ox and ass,  
 In manger poor the Babe He lies  
 That made the world and rules the skies.

<sup>1</sup> MS. Egerton, 2009-12, fol. 8.

## REGES DE SABA VENIENT<sup>1</sup>

### *Now is Christmas Ycome*

Fifteenth Century.

Now is Christmas ycome,  
Father and Son together in one,  
Holy Ghost, as ye be one,  
                                  in fere-a,<sup>2</sup>  
God send us a good New Year-a !

I would you sing for an I might,  
Of a Child is fair in sight,  
His mother him bare this endernight  
                                  so still-a,  
And as it was His will-a.

There came three kings fro Galilee  
Into Bethlehem, that fair city,  
To seek Him that ever should be  
                                  by right-a,  
Lord and king and knight-a.

As they came forth with their offering,  
They met with Herod, that moody king,  
                                  this tide-a,  
And this to them he said-a :

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> Together.

“ Of whence be ye, you kinges three ? ”

“ Of the East, as you may see,  
To seek Him that ever should be  
by right-a,  
Lord and king and knight-a.”

“ When you at this child have be,  
Come home again by me,  
Tell me the sight that you have see,  
I pray you ;  
Go you no other way-a.”

They took their leave, both old and ying,  
Of Herod, that moody king ;  
They went forth with their offering  
by light-a,  
By the star that shone so bright-a.

Till they came into the place  
Where Jesus and His mother was,  
Offered they up with great solace  
in fere-a  
Gold, incense, and myrrh-a.

The Father of heaven an angel down sent  
To thiccy <sup>1</sup> three kings that made present  
this tide-a,  
And this to them he said-a.

“ My Lord hath warned you every one,  
By Herod king you go not home ;  
For an you do, he will you slone <sup>2</sup>  
and strye-a, <sup>3</sup>  
And hurt you wonderly-a.”

<sup>1</sup> *Dialect still for these.*

<sup>2</sup> Slay.

<sup>3</sup> Destroy.

## CAROLS OF THE NATIVITY

Forth then went these kinges three,  
 Till they came home to their country ;  
 Glad and blithe they were all three  
 Of the sight that they had see  
   bydene-a ;<sup>1</sup>  
 The company was clean-a.

Kneel we now here a-down,  
 Pray we in good devotion  
 To the King of great renown,  
   of grace-a,  
 In heaven to have a place-a.

*Reges de Saba venient,  
 Aurum, tus, myrram offerent.  
 Alleluia*

## Fifteenth Century.

Now is the Twelfth Day ycome,  
 The Father and Son together are nome,<sup>2</sup>  
 The Holy Ghost, as they were wone,<sup>3</sup>  
   In fere.  
 God send us good New Year !

I will you sing with all my might,  
 Of a Child so fair in sight,  
 A maiden him bore this endernight,  
   So still ;  
 As it was his will.

<sup>1</sup> Together.<sup>2</sup> Taken.<sup>3</sup> Wont.

Three kingēs out of Galilee  
 Camen to Bethlehem, that city,  
 For to taken into that see <sup>1</sup>  
   By night ;  
 It was a full fair sight.

As they came forth with their offering,  
 They met with Herod, that moody king ;  
 He askēd them of their coming,  
   That tide,  
 And thus to them he said :

“ Fro whence come ye, kingēs three ? ”  
 “ Out of the East, as thou mayst see,  
 To seek Him that ever shall be,  
   Through right,  
 Lord and king of might.”

“ When ye have at that king a-be,  
 Come again this way by me,  
 And tell me the sights that [ye] have see ;  
   I pray,  
 Ye go none other way.”

Of Herod, [of] that moody king,  
 They took their leave, of old and ying ;  
 And forth they went with their offering  
   In sight,  
 And there they came by night.

<sup>1</sup> Domain.



## CAROLS OF THE NATIVITY

When they came into the place  
 Where Jesu with His mother was,  
 They made offering with great solace,  
   Not fear,  
 With gold, incense and myrrh.

As they were homeward ywent,  
 The Father of heaven an angel sent  
 To those three kings that made present,  
   Ere day,  
 And thus to them gan say :

“ My Lord hath warned you of your foe,  
 By King Herod that ye not go ;  
 For if ye do, he will you slo,<sup>1</sup>  
   And ’tray ;<sup>2</sup>  
 Ye go another way.”

When they came home to their country,  
 Blithe and glad they were all three  
 Of the sights that they had see,  
   By night,  
 Jesu and Mary bright.

With treason to us<sup>3</sup> gan he sayn,<sup>4</sup>  
 He trowed Jesu to have slain ;  
 Into Egypt they went full plain,  
   By side,  
 Joseph was their guide.

<sup>1</sup> Slay.<sup>3</sup> See note.<sup>2</sup> Betray.[<sup>4</sup> Say.

Into Bethlehem<sup>1</sup> they gan pass,  
 The star gan shinen in their face,  
 Brighter than ever shone sun in glass,  
                                   In land ;  
 Jesu with Mary they found.

King Herod he made his vow,  
 Great plenty of children he slow,<sup>2</sup>  
 He meant they should a-been Jesu ;  
                                   I say,  
 He fail'd of his prey.

Herod was wode<sup>3</sup> in royalty ;  
 He slew children right great plenty  
 In Bethlehem, that fair city,  
                                   With strife ;  
 Nor left he none in life.

The children of Israel cried, " Wa, wa ! "  
 The mothers of Bethlehem cried, " Ba, ba ! "  
 Herod, that wretch, [he] laughed " A-ha ! "  
                                   And said,  
 " The King of Jews is dead ! "

Almighty God in majesty,  
 In one God Persons Three,  
 Bring us to Thy bliss that is so free,  
                                   In fere ;  
 And send us a good New Year !  
       *Reges de Saba venient,*  
       *Aurum, tus, myrram, offerent.*

<sup>1</sup> See note.<sup>2</sup> Slew.<sup>3</sup> Mad.

*Be merry all that be present,  
Omnes de Saba venient*

Before 1536.

Out of the East a star shone bright,  
For to show three kinges light,  
Which had far travelled day and night  
To seek that Lord that all hath sent.

Thereof heard King Herod anon,  
That three kings should come through his region,  
To seek a child that peer had none,  
And after them soon he sent.

King Herod cried to them quickly :  
“ Ye go to seek a child truly ;  
Go forth and come again me by,  
And tell me where that he is lent.”<sup>1</sup>

Forth they went by the starry gleam,  
Till they came to merry Bethlehem ;  
There they found that sweet Bairn—Him,<sup>2</sup>  
That sithe for us His blood hath spent.

Balthasar kneelēd first adown  
And said : “ Hail, King, most of renown,  
And of all kings thou bearest the crown ;  
Therefore with gold I Thee present.”

Melchior kneeled down where he stood<sup>3</sup>  
And said : “ Hail, Lord, in Thy priesthood,  
Receive incense to Thy manhood,  
I bringē it with good intent.”

<sup>1</sup> Arrived, *lit.*, landed.

<sup>2</sup> *Text* : barn-teme = child.

<sup>3</sup> *Text* : in that stede = place.

Jasper kneeled down where he stood  
 And said : " Hail, Lord, in Thy knighthood,  
 I offer thee myrrh to Thy godhead,  
 For thou art He that all hath sent."

Now lords and ladies in rich array,  
 Lift up your hearts upon this day,  
 And ever to God let us pray,  
 That on the Rood was rent.

*Alleluia ! alleluia !  
 Deo Patri sit gloria*

Before 1536.

THERE is a Blossom sprung of a thorn,  
 To save mankind that was forlorn,  
 As the prophets said beforne,  
*Deo Patri sit gloria !*

There sprang a well at Mary's foot,  
 That turnèd all this world to boot ;<sup>1</sup>  
 Of her took Jesus flesh and blood,  
*Deo Patri sit gloria !*

From that well there stretched a stream,  
 Out of Egypt into Bethlehem ;  
 God through His highness turned it again,  
*Deo Patri sit gloria !*

There were three kings of divers lands,  
 They thought a thought that was strong,  
 Him to seek and thank among.  
*Deo Patri sit gloria !*

<sup>1</sup> Help.

They came richly with their presents,  
 With gold, myrrh and frankincense,  
 As clerkës read in their sequence,  
*Deo Patri sit gloria!*

The eldest king of them three,  
 He went foremost for he would see  
 What doomsman<sup>1</sup> that this should be,  
*Deo Patri sit gloria!*

The middlemost king up he rose,  
 He saw a Babe in armës close;  
 In middle age he thought He was.<sup>2</sup>  
*Deo Patri sit gloria!*

The youngest king up he stood,  
 He made his offering rich and good,  
 To Jesus Christ that shed His blood.  
*Deo Patri sit gloria!*

There shone a star out of heaven bright,  
 That men of earth should deem aright  
 That this was Jesu full of might.  
*Deo Patri sit gloria!*

*Out of the Blossom Sprang a Thorn*

Fifteenth Century.

Out of the blossom sprang a thorn,  
 When God himself would be born;  
 He let us never be forlorn,  
*That born was of Marie.*

<sup>1</sup> Judge.

<sup>2</sup> He had expected to find Him.

There sprang a well all at her foot,  
 That all this world is turned to good,  
 When Jesu Christ took flesh and blood  
*Of His mother Marie.*

Out of the well [there] sprang a stream  
 From patriarch to Jerusalem,<sup>1</sup>  
 Till Christ Himself it took again<sup>2</sup>  
*Of his mother Marie.*

In winter when the frost Him froze,  
 A poor bedding our Lord Him chose ;  
 Between an ox and an ass  
 Godës Son born He was  
*Of his mother Marie.*

It was upon the Twelfth Day,  
 There come three kings in rich array,  
 To seekë Christ where He lay  
*And his mother Marie.*

Three kings out of divers lands,  
 Swithe<sup>3</sup> comen with hearts [full] strong,  
 The Child to seek [they] underfong,<sup>4</sup>  
*That born was of Marie.*

The star led them a rightë way  
 To the Child where He lay ;  
 He helpeth us both night and day,  
*That born was of Marie.*

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> Quickly.

*Text:* again it nem.

<sup>4</sup> Undertook.

Balthazar was the first king,  
 He broughtë gold to his offering,  
 For to present that richë King,  
*And His mother Marie.*

Melchior was the second king,  
 He brought incense to his offering,  
 For to present that richë King,  
*And His mother Marie.*

Jasper was the third king,  
 He brought myrrh to his offering,  
 For to present that rich King,  
*And His mother Marie.*

There they offered their presents,  
 With gold and myrrh and frankincense,  
 As <sup>1</sup> clerks read in their sequence  
*In Epiphany.*

Kneel we down Him beforne,  
 And pray we to Him that now is born,  
 He <sup>1</sup> let us never be forlorn,  
*That born was of Marie.*

<sup>1</sup> *Text:* and.







Domine labia mea  
aperies.  
Et os meum an-  
nuntiabit laudem tuam.

Comme la vierge Marie comme meit de dieu tout paisant. ce roigie de melenor de la sainte  
de tous le manoir de la dignite de meit de dieu tout paisant de tous le manoir de la sainte

*Nunc gaudet Ecclesia*

# NUNC GAUDET ECCLESIA <sup>1</sup>

## *Welcome Yule*

Fifteenth Century.

WELCOME, Yule, thou merry man, in worship  
of this holy day,  
Welcome be Thou, heaven's King,  
Welcome, born in one morning,  
Welcome, for whom we shall sing,  
*Welcome Yule.*

Welcome be ye, Stephen and John,  
Welcome, Innocents every one,  
Welcome Thomas, martyred one,  
*Welcome Yule.*

Welcome be ye, good New Year,  
Welcome Twelfth Day, both in fere,  
Welcome saints [both] lief and dear,  
*Welcome Yule.*

Welcome be ye, Candlemas,  
Welcome be ye, Queen of Bliss,  
Welcome both to more and less,  
*Welcome Yule.*

<sup>1</sup> See note.

Welcome be ye that are here,  
 Welcome all and make good cheer,  
 Welcome all another year,  
*Welcome Yule.*

*Eia, Martyr Stephane*

Fifteenth Century.

*Eia, Martyr Stephane*  
 Pray for us, we pray to thee.  
 To this martyr praise be given,  
*Qui triumphavit hodie,*  
 And did gain the bliss of heaven,  
*Dono cœlestis gratiæ.*  
 Stoned he was with stonës great,  
*Fervore gentis impiæ.*  
 Then saw he Christ set on His seat  
*Innixum Patris dextere.*  
 Thou prayest Christ for thine enemies,  
*O martyr invictissime!*  
 Then pray for us that high Justice  
*Ut nos purget a crimine. Amen.*

*Pray for us that we savèd be,  
 Protomartyr Stephane*

Before 1529.

IN this vale of wretchedness,  
 Yprovèd was thy meekness,  
 Where thou art in joy and bliss,  
*Circumfultus undique.*

With faith all armed in field to fight  
 Sad thou stoodest as God's [own] knight,  
 Teaching the people, of God His might,  
*O facies plena gracia!*

Before the tyrant thou wert brought,  
 Strokes of pain thou dreadedst nought,  
 God was with thee in all thy thought,  
*Spes eterne glorie.*

With sinful wretches thou were take,  
 Thy faith thou wouldest not forsake,  
 But rather to die for God's sake,  
*Circumfuso sanguine.*

### *Saint Stephen was a Clerk*<sup>1</sup>

Fifteenth Century.

SAINT Stephen was a clerk in King Herod's hall,  
 And served him of bread and cloth, as ever king befall.

Stephen out of kitchen came with boar's head in [his] hand,  
 He saw a star [that] was fair and bright over Bethlehem stand.

He cast adown the boar's head and went into the hall:  
 "I forsake thee, King Herod, and thy workës all."

"I forsake thee, King Herod, and thy workës all;  
 There is a child in Bethlehem born is better than we all."

"What aileth thee, Stephen, what is thee befall?  
 Lacketh thee either meat or drink in King Herod's hall?"

<sup>1</sup> See note.

“Lacketh me neither meat nor drink in King Herod’s hall,  
There is a child in Bethlehem born is better than we all.”

“What aileth thee, Stephen, art thou mad, or thou ginnest  
to brede<sup>1</sup>?”

Lacketh thee either gold or fee or any richē weed?”

“Lacketh me neither gold nor fee, nor no richē weed,  
There is a child in Bethlehem born shall help us at our need.”

“That is all so sooth, Stephen, all so sooth ywis,  
As this capon crow [it] shall that lieth here in my dish.”

That word was not so soonē said, that word in that hall,  
The capon crew, *Christus natus est*, among the lordēs all.

“Riseth up my tormentors, by twos and all by one,  
And leadeth Stephen out of this town, and stoneth him with  
stone.”

Took [they then] Stephen and stoned him in the way,  
Therefore is his even on Christēs own day.

*Now sing we, both all and some :*  
*Lapidaverunt Stephanum*

Before 1536.

WHEN Saint Stephen was at Jerusalem,  
Godēs laws he loved to learn,  
That made the Jews to cry so clear and clean,

*Lapidaverunt Stephanum.*

*Now sing we, both all and some :*

*Lapidaverunt Stephanum.*

<sup>1</sup> Rave.

The Jews that were both false and fell,  
 Against Saint Stephen they were cruel,  
 Him to slay they made great yell,

*And lapidaverunt Stephanum.*

*Now sing we, both all and some :*

*Lapidaverunt Stephanum.*

They pullèd him without the town,  
 And then he meekly kneelèd down,  
 While the Jews cracked his crown,

*Quia lapidaverunt Stephanum.*

*Now sing we, both all and some :*

*Lapidaverunt Stephanum.*

Great stones and bones at him they cast,  
 Veins and bones of him they brast,<sup>1</sup>  
 And they killed him at the last,

*Quia lapidaverunt Stephanum.*

*Now sing we both all and some :*

*Lapidaverunt Stephanum.*

Pray we all that now be here,  
 Unto Saint Stephen, that martyr clear,  
 To save us all from the fiendës fear.

*Lapidaverunt Stephanum.*

*Now sing we both all and some :*

*Lapidaverunt Stephanum.*

<sup>1</sup> Burst.

*Pray for us to the Prince of peace,  
Amice Christi, Johannes* <sup>1</sup>

Before 1529.

To thee now, Christ's dear darling,  
That wert maiden <sup>2</sup> both old and ying,  
My heart is set a song to sing,  
*Amice Christi, Johannes.*

For thou wert so clean a maid,  
The secrets of heaven were to thee said  
When on Christ's breast thou wert laid,  
*Amice Christi, Johannes.*

When Christ before Pilate was brought,  
Thou, clean of heart, forsook Him nought,  
To die with Him was all thy thought,  
*Amice Christi, Johannes.*

Christ's mother thou tookest home with thee  
Maiden, a maiden's friend to be,  
Thou be our help, we pray to thee,  
*Amice Christi, Johannes.*

*Pray for us to the Trinity,  
Johannes, Christi care*

Before 1536.

THOU dearest disciple of Jesu Christ,  
Most best beloved and best betrust,<sup>3</sup>  
Which at his Last Supper did lie on his breast,  
*Sacra fluenta potare.*

*Pray for us to the Trinity,  
Johannes, Christi care!*

<sup>1</sup> In another version the third person is used throughout.

<sup>2</sup> Bachelor.

<sup>3</sup> Trusted.

As [He] in His Passion to His dear mother,  
Took thee for her keeper, her son and His brother,  
Pray that our hearts may most of all other

*Jesum semper amare.*

*Pray for us to the Trinity,  
Johannes, Christi care!*

And as thou the strong venom which two men had slain,  
Drank (thou) without hurt, and raised them again,  
Pray that the venom of sin may us not pain,

*Non poterit alligare.*

*Pray for us to the Trinity,  
Johannes, Christi care!*

As thou the two men their treasure did restore,  
That had forsaken and mourned therefore,  
Pray that we may false riches forsake for evermore,

*Gelis tesaurizare.*

*Pray for us to the Trinity,  
Johannes, Christi care!*

And pray that we may have such grace,  
Here so to mourn for our trespass,  
That we may stand sicker<sup>1</sup> before Christ's face,

*Cum venerit judicare.*

*Pray for us to the Trinity,  
Johannes, Christi care!*

<sup>1</sup> Secure. Scotch, sicker.



*Worship we this holy day,  
That all Innocents for us pray*

Before 1529.

HEROD that was both wild and wode,  
Full much he shed of Christian blood,  
To slay that Child so meek of mood,  
That Mary bare, that clean may.

Mary with Jesu forth yfraught,<sup>1</sup>  
As the angel her taught,  
To flee the land till it were sought,  
To Egypt <sup>2</sup> she took her way.

Herod slew with pride and sin  
Thousands of two year and within ;  
The body of Christ he thought to win  
And to destroy the Christian fay.<sup>3</sup>

Now Jesus that didst die for us on the Rood,  
And didst christen innocents in their blood,  
By the prayer of Thy mother good,  
Bring us to bliss that lasteth ay.

*Psallite gaudentes,  
Infantum festa colentes*

Before 1529.

WHEN God was born of Mary free,  
Herod, the king of Galilee,  
Was moved to malice by kinges three  
*Munera portantes,  
Regem natum venerantes.*

<sup>1</sup> Laden.

<sup>2</sup> Text: Epytte.

<sup>3</sup> Faith.

Herod sent for men armed bright  
 To seek and slay the King of light ;  
 The blessed Child drew fro Herod's might,  
*Armati sunt perimentes.*

*A, a, a, a,*  
*Nunc gaudet ecclesia*

Fifteenth Century.

LISTENETH, lordings, both great and small,  
 I shall you tell a wonder tale,  
 How Holy Church was brought in bale,  
*Cum magna injuria.*

The greatest clerk in all this land,  
 Thomas of Canterbury, I understand,  
 Slain he was by wicked hand,  
*Demonis<sup>1</sup> potencia.*

Knights camen fro Henry<sup>2</sup> king,  
 Wicked men, without leasing,<sup>3</sup>  
 There they diden a wonder thing,  
*Ferventes insania.<sup>4</sup>*

They sought him all about,  
 Within the palace and without ;  
 Of Jesu Christ had they no doubt,<sup>5</sup>  
*In sua malicia.*

They opened their mouths wonder wide,  
 To Thomas they spaken mickle pride,  
 " Traitor, here, thou shalt abide,  
*Ferens mortis tedia."*

<sup>1</sup> Another reading: malorum.      <sup>2</sup> Elsewhere, Harry and Hendry.  
<sup>3</sup> Lie, i.e. truly.      <sup>4</sup> Elsewhere: Per regis imperia.      <sup>5</sup> Fear.

Thomas answered with mildē cheer,  
 " If ye will me slay in this manner,  
 Let them pass, all that are here,  
*Sine contumel[i]a."*

Beforen his altar he kneeled adown,  
 There they began to pare his crown ;  
 They stirred the brainēs up so down,<sup>1</sup>  
*Optans celi gaudia.*

The tormentors about [they] start,  
 With deadly wounds they gan him hurt ;  
 Thomas died in Mother-Church,  
*Pergens ad celestia.*

Mother, clerk, widow, and wife,  
 Worship ye Thomas in all your life ;  
 For fifty-two points <sup>2</sup> he lost his life,  
*Contra regis consilia.*

<sup>1</sup> Upside down.

<sup>2</sup> The Constitutions of Clarendon, 1164.

## APPENDIX I<sup>1</sup>

### LATIN, ANGLO-NORMAN, AND FRENCH CAROLS

#### *Ecce quod Natura*

ECCE quod natura  
Mutat sua jura,  
Virgo parit pura  
Dei Filium.

Ecce novum gaudium,  
Ecce novum mirum,  
Virgo parit filium,  
Que non novit virum ;  
Sed ut pirus pirum  
Gleba fert saphirum,  
Dei Filium.

Mundum Deus flebilem  
Videns in ruina,  
Rosam dilectabilem  
Produxit de spina,  
Produxit de spina,  
Que celi regina  
Nostra medicina  
Et salus hominum.

<sup>1</sup> See note.

Nequivit Divinitas  
 Plus humilimè ;  
 Nec nostra fragilitas  
 Magis exaltari,  
 Magis exaltari,  
 Quam celo locari,  
 Deo coequari,  
 Per conjugina.

*Seignors, Ore Entendez à Nus*

Early Thirteenth Century.

SEIGNORS, ore entendez à nus,  
 De loinz sumes venuz à wous,  
 Pur quere Noel ;  
 Car l'em nus dit que en cest hostel  
 Soleit tenir sa feste anuel,  
 Ahi, cest jur.  
*Deu doint à tuz icels joie d'amurs,  
 Qui à Danz Noel ferunt honors !*

Seignors, jo vus dis por veir,  
 Ke Danz Noel ne velt avoir  
 Si joie non ;  
 E repleni sa maison  
 De payn, de char, e de peison,  
 Por faire honor.  
*Deu doint à tuz cels joie d'amurs,  
 Qui à Danz Noel ferunt honors !*

Seignors, il est crié en l'ost,  
 Que cil qui despent bien, e tost,  
 E largement,

E fet les granz honors sovent,  
 Deu li duple quanque il despent,  
 Por faire henor.

*Deu doit à tuz icels joie d'amours,  
 Qui à Danz Noel ferunt honors !*

Seignors, escriez les malveis,  
 Car vuz nel les troverez jameis,  
 De bone part :

Botun, batun, ferun, groinard,  
 Car tot dis a le quer cunard  
 Por faire henor.

*Deu doit à tuz icels joie d'amours,  
 Qui à Danz Noel ferunt honors !*

Noel beyt bien li vin Engleis,  
 E li Gascoïn, e li Franceys,  
 E l'Angevin ;

Noel fait beivere son veisin,  
 Si qu'il se dort, le chief enclin,  
 Sovent le jor.

*Deu doit à tuz cels joie d'amours,  
 Qui à Danz Noel ferunt honors !*

Seignors, jo vus di par Noel,  
 E par li sires de cest hostel,  
 Car bevez ben ;

E jo primes beberai le men,  
 E pois après chescon le soen,  
 Par mon conseil ;

*Si jo vus di trestoz, "Wesseyl !"  
 Dehaiz eit qui ne dirra, "Drincheyl !"*

*Anglo-Norman Carol*

Translated by F. Douce.

LORDINGS, listen to our lay—  
 We have come from far away  
     To seek Christmas ;  
 In this mansion we are told  
 He his yearly feast doth hold ;  
     'Tis to-day !  
 May joy come from God above,  
 To all those who Christmas love.

Lordings, I now tell you true,  
 Christmas bringeth unto you  
     Only mirth ;  
 His house he fills with many a dish  
 Of bread and meat and also fish,  
     To grace the day.  
 May joy come from God above,  
 To all those who Christmas love.

Lordings, through our army's band  
 They say—who spends with open hand  
     Free and fast,  
 And oft regales his many friends—  
 God gives him double what he spends,  
     To grace the day.  
 May joy come from God above,  
 To all those who Christmas love.

Lordings, wicked men eschew,  
 In them never shall you view  
     Aught that's good ;

Cowards are the rabble rout,  
 Kick and beat the grumblers out,  
     To grace the day.

May joy come from God above,  
 To all those who Christmas love.

To English ale and Gascon wine,  
 And French, doth Christmas much incline—  
     And Anjou's, too ;

He makes his neighbour freely drink,  
 So that in sleep his head doth sink  
     Often by day.

May joy come from God above,  
 To all those who Christmas love.

Lords, by Christmas and the host  
 Of this mansion hear my toast—  
     Drink it well—

Each must drain his cup of wine,  
 And I the first will toss off mine :  
     Thus I advise.

Here then I bid you all *Wassail*,  
 Cursed be he who will not say, *Drinkhail*.  
 May joy come from God above,  
 To all those who Christmas love.

### *Célébrons la Naissance*

Late Sixteenth Century.

CÉLÉBRONS la Naissance  
     *Nostrī Salvatoris*,  
 Qui fait la complaisance  
     *Dei sui Patris ;*



Cet Enfan tout aimable,  
*In nocte media*  
 Est né dans une étable  
*De casta Maria.*  
 Cette heureuse nouvelle  
*Olim pastoribus*  
 Par un ange fidelle  
*Fuit nunciatus,*  
 Leur disant, " Laissez paître  
*In agro viridi,*  
 Venez voir notre Maître,  
*Filiumque Dei."*  
 A cette voix céleste  
*Omnes hi pastores,*  
 D'un air doux et modeste,  
*Et multum gaudentes,*  
 Incontinent marchèrent  
*Relicto pecore ;*  
 Tous ensemble arrivèrent  
*In Bethlem Judæ.*  
 Le premier qu'ils trouvèrent  
*Intrantes stabulum,*  
 Fut Joseph, ce bon père,  
*Senio confectum,*  
 Qui d'ardeur nompareille,  
*It obviam illis,*  
 Les reçoit, les accueille  
*Expansis brachiis.*  
 Il fait à tous caresse,  
*Et in præsepio*  
 Fait voir plein d'alégresse  
*Matrem cum Filio ;*

Ces bergers s'étonnèrent  
*Intuentes Eum,*  
Que les anges révèrent  
*Pannis involutum.*  
Lorsqu'ils se prosternèrent  
*Cum reverentia,*  
Et tous ils adorèrent,  
*Pietate summa,*  
Ce Sauveur tout aimable  
*Qui homo factus est,*  
Et qui dans une étable  
*Nasci dignatus est,*  
D'un cœur humble et sincère,  
*Suis muneribus,*  
Donnèrent à la mère  
*Et Filio ejus*  
Des marques de tendresse ;  
*Atque his peractis,*  
Font voir leur alégresse  
*Hymnis et canticis.*  
Mille esprits angéliques  
*Juncti pastoribus*  
Chantent dans leur musique :  
*“ Puer nobis natus ;*  
Au Dieu par qui vous sommes,  
*Gloria in excelsis,*  
Et la paix soit aux hommes  
*Bonæ voluntatis ! ”*  
Jamais pareilles fêtes !  
*Judicio omnium,*  
Même jusques aux bêtes  
*Testantur gaudium.*

Enfin cette Naissance  
*Cunctis creaturis*  
Donne jouissance,  
*Et replet gaudiis.*  
Qu'on ne soit insensible,  
*Adeamus omnes,*  
Ce Dieu rendu passible  
*Propter nos mortales,*  
Et tous de compagnie  
*Exoramus Eum,*  
Qu'a la fin de la vie  
*Dei regnum beatum.*

## APPENDIX II<sup>1</sup>

### CAROLS NOT RELATED TO CHRISTMAS

#### *A Carol of Hunting*<sup>2</sup>

1521.

As I came by a green forest-side  
I met with a forester that bade me abide,  
With "Hey go bet,<sup>3</sup> hey go bet, hey go howe!"  
Underneath a tree I did me set,  
And with a great hart anon I met.  
I bad let slip, and said, "Hey go bet!"  
With "Hey go bet, hey go bet, howe!"  
I had not stood there but a while,  
For the maintenance of a mile,  
There came a great hart, without guile:  
"There he goeth, there he goeth, hey go howe!  
We shall have game and sport ynow."  
Talbot my hound with a merry taste  
All about the green wood he gan cast.  
I took my horn and blew him a blast,  
With "Tro-ro-ro-ro, tro-ro-ro-ro!"  
With "Hey go bet, hey go bet, hey go howe!  
There he goeth, there he goeth, hey go howe!  
We shall have sport and game ynow!"

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

<sup>2</sup> *Christmas Carolles* (Wynkyn de Worde).

<sup>3</sup> Better or beat? Hey go bet is a hunting cry.

*My Love that Mourneth for Me*<sup>1</sup>*Temp.* Henry VIII.

John Gwynneth.

AND I mankind  
 Have not in mind,  
 My love that mourneth for me, for me.  
 Who is my love  
 But God above  
 That born was of Mary ?

And on the Rood  
 His precious blood  
 He shed to make me free.  
 Whom should I prove  
 So true of love  
 So gentle and courteous as He ?

That King of bliss  
 My love He is  
 That mourneth so sore for me,

. . . .  
 . . . .  
 . . . . . . .

The Father His Son  
 From heaven sent down  
 That born was of a maid ;  
 The prophecy  
 Of Isay  
 Fulfill'd He and said :

<sup>1</sup> See note.

“ Behold, mankind,  
Thy Maker most loving  
For thy love come to die.  
What is thy mind  
To be so unkind  
Sith I so mourn for thee, for thee ? ”

That virgin's Child,  
Most meek and mild,  
Alonely for my sake,  
His Father's will  
For to fulfill  
He came great pains to take.

And suffered death  
As Scripture saith,  
That we should savēd be,  
On Good Friday,  
Wherefore I say  
He mourned sore for me, for me.

Such pain and smart  
As in His heart  
He suffered for mankind,  
Can no man take  
Nor mourning make  
So meekly for his friend.

The cruel Jews  
Would not refuse  
To nail Him to a tree,  
And with a dart  
To pierce His heart  
Thus mourned He for me.

Now Christ Jesu,  
 Of love most true,  
     Have mercy upon me ;  
 I ask the grace  
 For my trespass  
     That I have done to Thee.

For Thy sweet name,  
 Save me from shame  
     And all adversity ;  
 For Mary's sake,  
 To Thee me take  
     And mourn no more for me.

*The Rose of Ryse*<sup>1</sup>

Fifteenth Century.

THE rose is the fairest flower of all,  
 That evermore was, or evermore shall,  
     The rose of ryse.<sup>2</sup>  
 Of all these flowers the rose bears prize.  
 The rose, it is the fairest flower,  
 The rose is sweetest of odour.

The rose in care is comforter,  
 The rose in sickness it is salver,<sup>3</sup>  
     The rose so bright.  
 In medicine it is most of might,  
 Witness these clerkēs that be wise.  
 The rose is the flower most holden in prize.

<sup>1</sup> MS. 31,042, fol. 110b. See note. <sup>2</sup> On the branch. <sup>3</sup> Saviour.

Therefore methinks the fleur-de-lys  
 Shouldē worship the rose of ryse,  
 And be his thrall ;  
 And so should other flowers all.  
 Many a knight with spear and lance,  
 Followed that rose to his pleasance.

When the rose betided a chance,  
 Then followed all the flowers of France  
 And changēd hue,  
 In pleasance of the rose so true.  
 [Incomplete.]

*My Heart of Gold*<sup>1</sup>

1546-52.

*My heart of gold as true as steel,  
 As I me leanēd to a bough,  
 In faith, but if ye love me well—  
 Lord ! So Robin lough.*<sup>2</sup>

My lady went to Canterbury,  
 The saint <sup>3</sup> her help to be ;  
 She met with Kate of Malmesbury :  
 “ Why sleepest thou in an apple-tree ? ”  
*My heart of gold, &c.*

Nine miles to Michaelmas,  
 Our dame began to brew.  
 Michael set his mare to grass.  
 Lord ! so fast it snew.  
*My heart of gold, &c.*

<sup>1</sup> Richard Kele's *Christmas Carols*. See note.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas à Becket.

<sup>2</sup> Laughed.



## CAROLS OF THE NATIVITY

“ For you, love, I brake my glass ;  
 Your gown is furred with blue.  
 The devil is dead, for there I was,  
 Ywis, it is full true.

*My heart of gold, &c.*

And if ye sleep, the cock will crow ;  
 True heart, think what I say.  
 Jackanapes will make a mow<sup>1</sup> ;  
 Look, who dare say him nay ?

*My heart of gold, &c.*

I pray you, have me now in mind,  
 I tell you of the matter.  
 He blew his horn against the wind ;  
 The cow goeth to the water.

*My heart of gold, &c.*

Yet I tell you mickle more :  
 The cat lieth in the cradle.  
 I pray you, keep true heart in store,  
 A penny for a ladle.

*My heart of gold, &c.*

I swear by St. Katherine of Kent,  
 The goose goeth to the green,  
 All our dog's tail is brent,  
 It is not as I ween.

*My heart of gold, &c.*

*Tyrlery lorpin* the laverock sang,  
 So merrily pipes the sparrow ;  
 The cow brake loose, the rope ran home—  
 Sir, God give you Good-Morrow !

*My heart of gold, &c.*

<sup>1</sup> Face.

*All under the Leaves, and the Leaves of Life*<sup>1</sup>

Traditional.

ALL under the leaves, and the leaves of life,  
 I met with virgins seven,  
 And one of them was Mary mild,  
 Our Lord's mother of heaven.

"O what are you seeking, you seven fair maids,  
 All under the leaves of life;  
 Come tell, come tell, what seek you  
 All under the leaves of life?"

"We're seeking for no leaves, Thomas,<sup>2</sup>  
 But for a friend of thine,  
 We're seeking for sweet Jesus Christ,  
 To be our guide and thine!"

"Go down, go down to yonder town  
 And sit in the gallery,  
 And there you'll see sweet Jesus Christ  
 Nailed to a big yew-tree!"

So down they went to yonder town  
 As fast as foot could fall,  
 And many a grievous bitter tear  
 From the Virgin's eye did fall.

"O peace, mother, O peace, mother,  
 Your weeping doth me grieve;  
 I must suffer this," he said,  
 "For Adam and for Eve."

<sup>1</sup> See note.<sup>2</sup> Doubting Thomas?

## CAROLS OF THE NATIVITY

“ O mother, take you John Evangelist  
 All for to be your son,  
 And he will comfort you sometimes,  
 Mother, as I have done.”

“ O come thou, John Evangelist,  
 Thou’rt welcome unto me,  
 But more welcome my own dear Son  
 Whom I nursed on my knee.”

Then he laid his head on his right shoulder,  
 Seeing death it struck him nigh,  
 “ The holy Mother be with your soul,  
 I die, mother dear, I die.”

O the rose, the gentle rose,  
 And the fennel that grows so green,  
 God give us grace in every place  
 To pray for our king and queen.

Furthermore for our enemies all  
 Our prayers they should be strong :  
 Amen, good Lord ; your charity  
 Is the ending of my song.

*To-morrow shall be My Dancing Day*

Traditional.

TO-MORROW shall be my dancing day,  
 I would my true love did so chance  
 To see the legend of my play,  
 To call my true love to my dance.

*Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,  
 This have I done for my true love.*

Then was I born of a virgin pure,  
Of her I took fleshly substance ;  
Thus was I knit to man's nature,  
To call my true love to my dance.  
*Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,  
This have I done for my true love.*

In a manger laid and wrapped I was,  
So very poor, this was my chance,  
Betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass,  
To call my true love to my dance.  
*Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,  
This have I done for my true love.*

Then afterwards baptized I was,  
The Holy Ghost on me did glance,  
My Father's voice heard from above,  
To call my true love to my dance.  
*Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,  
This have I done for my true love.*

Into the desert I was led,  
Where I fasted without substance ;  
The devil bade me make stones my bread,  
To have me break my true love's dance.  
*Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,  
This have I done for my true love.*

The Jews on me they make great suit,  
And with me made great variance,  
Because they loved darkness rather than light,  
To call my true love to my dance.  
*Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,  
This have I done for my true love.*

## CAROLS OF THE NATIVITY

For thirty pence Judas me sold,  
 His covetousness for to advance.  
 Mark whom I kiss, the same do hold,  
 The same is he shall lead the dance.  
*Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,*  
*This have I done for my true love.*

Before Pilate the Jews me brought,  
 Where Barabbas had deliverance,  
 They scourged me and set me at nought,  
 Judged me to die to lead the dance.  
*Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,*  
*This have I done for my true love.*

Then on the Cross hanged I was,  
 Where a spear to my heart did glance;  
 There issued forth both water and blood,  
 To call my true love to my dance.  
*Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,*  
*This have I done for my true love.*

Then down to hell I took my way  
 For my true love's deliverance,  
 And rose again on the third day,  
 Up to my true love and the dance.  
*Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,*  
*This have I done for my true love.*

Then up to heaven I did ascend,  
 Where now I dwell in sure substance,  
 On the right hand of God, that man  
 May come into the general dance.  
*Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,*  
*This have I done for my true love.*

## NOTES

P. 3. *Virgo Rosa Virginum*. Carols in honour of the Virgin belong almost entirely to pre-Reformation times, and bear marks of ecclesiastical origin in their frequent use of refrains from the Latin hymns. I have included in this group all carols in which special appeal is made to Mary. Many of them are among the most exquisite in feeling and melody.

P. 4. *Driht*. The Anglo-Saxon word for *Lord*, the latest use of which quoted in the New English Dictionary is 1450.

P. 7. *M and A and R and I*. This is the better of two very similar versions.

P. 8. *There is no Rose*, &c. This is one of thirteen carols found in a Cambridge MS., T.C.C. o. 3, 58, part of which at least is attributed to John Dunstable of Henry VII.'s Chapel. It is quite uncertain whether he wrote the words as well as the music.

P. 9. *Of a rose*, &c. There are two versions, differing slightly.

P. 14. *Alma Redemptoris Mater*. This carol is found in several versions differing slightly. The music was perhaps written by Dunstable.

P. 19. *Before 1529*. Because it is found in the Fairfax MS., supposed to have belonged to Robert Fairfax of Henry VIII.'s Chapel, who died in that year.

P. 20. *A song upon*, &c. I have not come upon the original on which this carol is based. It is a type of poem very popular in the fifteenth century, the Vision, and relates itself in treatment to the more elaborate carol on p. 174; but it stands, I think, alone in representing Mary as prophesying the event, and picturing herself as singing lullaby.

P. 24. "*Marvel not, Joseph*," &c. This carol and the following seem to be unique. I have classified them in this group because, after all, Mary is the poet's theme, the use made of Joseph being merely an original way of emphasizing the subject.

P. 25. *Joseph being an Aged Man.* The vague resemblances between this carol and the preceding suggest that they sprang from the same source, more especially as this aspect of the subject does not seem to be treated elsewhere. The idea is distinctly mediæval, as is shown by the occurrence of a similar dialogue in the *Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors* (Coventry Plays). The subject is illustrated in MS. 17,587 (British Museum) about 1300, fol. c., where Joseph seems to be sleeping "on a frame." The refrain "dearest dear" suggests that the carol may have been adapted from some love-song.

P. 28. *Ecce Ancilla Domini.* The group of carols embodying the single incident of the Annunciation is clearly marked, but less original than some of the others in that the texts keep fairly close to the Biblical narrative. Most of them were written before the Reformation.

P. 38. *The Conception of Christ.* This was probably written by John Wedderburn, whose name is especially associated with the Reformation in Scotland. Its interest lies chiefly in its introduction of a lullaby refrain into the Annunciation episode.

P. 41. *In Die Nativitatis.* In this group I have tried to set apart the carols which treat of the Nativity chiefly from the historic and dramatic side. They merge into the class in which emphasis is laid on the meaning of the Incarnation (*Mirabile Misterium*). As most carols on this theme touch upon both phases, it is difficult sometimes to say which aspect is the more emphatic, consequently how the poem is to be classed. From the generalized treatment of the subject, on the one hand, and, on the other, from the attempt in small compass to touch upon the chief features of the incident, these carols are among the least interesting.

P. 49. *Frankincense.* The abrupt conclusion hints that the carol is incomplete, while the lack of rhyme in the last line shows corruption of the text.

P. 53. *Make we Joy, &c.* This carol might better be printed in the form of short couplets, alternately English and Latin. Its sole interest lies in its macaronic character. It is evidently with intention that a Latin line follows a Latin, and an English an English, while the rhyme is between one of each.

P. 54. *Come to Bethlehem, &c.* These five lines seem to be quoted from another carol to the music of which the text actually printed is modelled. This is seemingly unique in its theme, which is a contrasting of the moods of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and



Easter, *i.e.* the alternate fasts and feasts, the sentiment being that the former could be well spared.

P. 54. *A tansy.* This was a herb-dish intended as a corrective for the fish-diet of Lent. Various recipes are given for its preparation. The following is taken from a book of cookery with the sub-title *The Good Housewife's Handmaid*, 1597. "Take all manner of herbs and the spawn of a pike or any other fish and blanched almonds and a few crumbs of bread and a little fair water and a pint of rosewater, and mingle all together, and make it not too thin, and fry it in oil, and so serve it in." The fish ingredient was often lacking.

P. 55. *The First Nowell, &c.* This traditional carol, apparently first printed by Sandys in 1833, is yet quite in the old spirit.

P. 57. *Out of the Orient, &c.* This unpublished carol, written evidently not long before 1613 belongs still to the old tradition, but lacks the ingenuousness of the earlier lyrics.

P. 58. *Falántidingdido.* I have not found this refrain elsewhere, nor is it in the New English Dictionary. Notwithstanding the apparent suggestion of the word *tiding*, it seems to be mere nonsense; and from the rhythm I incline to think that it was accented *Falántidingdido*.

P. 59. *O Jesu Parvule.* Beyond doubt the most original and beautiful of the carols are those which depart from the Scripture material, and present imaginary scenes from the childhood of Christ, by far the greater number being the lullabies. Their popularity is attested not only by their number but also by the many repetitions with only slight variations. It seems reasonably certain *a priori* that the lullaby carols were suggested by the representations of the *crèche* in the churches, or by the Nativity scenes in the religious drama of the time. Indeed, the carol on p. 76 is taken from a miracle play.

P. 59. *I Saw, &c.* The simplest of all the lullabies is probably the oldest. The MS. in which it is found was said by T. Martin of Palgrave to be in the writing of John Brackley, friar minor of Norwich, tutor of William Paston, Justice of Common Pleas, 1378-1444. Although Brackley was still alive in 1461, a memorandum by John Whyte attributes the songs in the manuscript to the time of Richard II. and Henry IV. The music is given with the words.

P. 59. *This Endernight, &c.* This carol exists in at least four versions of which Dr. Dyboski prints three (E.E.T.S., Extra



Series CI.), giving the variants of the fourth. They are all so obviously from the same original and differ so slightly that, in consideration of their length, I have ventured to use them all in making a translation that is in some sense a composite. The chief variations are:—

1. A star as bright as *any* day, with the corresponding long line: Lullay, by-by, *lully*, lullay.

2. My Son, my *Brother*, my *dear darling*.

3. Then spake the Child that was so ying, and thus methought *He* said.

4. I am known as Heaven-King, &c.

5. To me shall light.

6. Now, Jesu, my son, Heaven-King, &c.

7. The Lord of might.

8. *For* And then among But nevertheless, &c., *from stanza 2.*

9. Mary, mother, queen of bliss, methinketh it is no law  
That I should go to the kings and they not to me draw.

10. Jesu, my Son, I pray Thee, say as Thou art to me dear.

11. *For* Yet more than this, &c., *read:*

Both rock thee still

And dance Thee theretill.

12. *For* And keep me, &c., *read:* And dance me now full oft.

13. Jesu, my Son, Heaven-King, if it be Thy will,

Grant Thou me mine asking, as reason would and skill.

14. *For* That child or man, &c., *read:*

Whatsoever they be,

That can and will be.

15. Last stanza omitted.

P. 68. *Mother white*, &c. This carol shows in about its simplest form the extension of the episode in which the Child replies. In some of the sixteenth-century carols it grows into a long prophetic narrative of Christ's life and death uttered by Himself in the cradle, usually combined with a lullaby refrain.

P. 78. *Shall I, mother*, &c. Although the refrain suggests that this carol belongs to the preceding group, the narrative is entirely in the past, and Mary's part is wholly submerged.

P. 84. *The Holy Well*. This carol and the three following belong to a mass of traditions such as appear in the *Vita Christi* (MS. 29,434, circa 1400, in the British Museum), of which seemingly only these few have survived, at least in carol form. In an eighteenth-century broadside edition this poem is described

as "a very ancient carol," and indeed, in spirit, as Mr. Bullen observes, it seems to be as old as the fifteenth century. Moreover, in the *Vita Christi* (fol. 56, 61) we have illustrations of Christ at a well with other children, which may refer to this or a similar legend.

P. 86. *The Bitter Withy, or The Withies.* This version of the preceding was sung in Herefordshire as late as 1888 (cf. *Notes and Queries*, tenth series, iv. pp. 84-85) by an old man who had learned it from his grandmother. It is noteworthy for the change of attitude; in the preceding carol it is Mary that is vindictive, in this the Christ-Child Himself. In the *Vita Christi* (fol. 64b) is a picture of three children in a river and Christ on the bank, which seems to illustrate this episode. The beating of the Child is said to be represented in a fresco at Lucca.

P. 87. *Three jolly jerdins.* The word *jerdin* seems to be unknown. It may have been corrupted from *virgins* to make alliteration, but the children were apparently boys.

P. 88. *The Cherry-Tree Carol.* Not having the numerous forms of this popular carol before me, I have followed Mr. Bullen in his eclectic version. The antiquity of the episode upon which it is based is shown by its occurrence in one of the Coventry plays. The scene is as follows:—

*Mary.* Ah, my sweet husband, will ye tell to me  
What tree is yon standing upon yon hill?

*Joseph.* Forsooth, Mary, it is cleped a cherry-tree.  
In time of year ye might feed you thereon your fill.

*Mary.* Turn again, husband, and behold yon tree,  
How that it bloometh now so sweetly.

*Joseph.* Come on, Mary, that we were at yon city,  
Or else we may be blamed, I tell you lightly.

*Mary.* Now, my spouse, I pray you to behold  
How the cherries grow upon yon tree;  
For to have thereof right fain I would,  
An it pleased you to labour so much for me.

*Joseph.* Your desire to fulfil I shall assay sickerly.  
Ow, to pluck you of these cherries it is a work wild,  
For the tree is so high it will not be lightly;  
Therefore let him pluck you cherries, begot you with child.

*Mary.* Now, good Lord, I pray Thee, grant me this boon,  
To have of these cherries, if it be your will.

Now I thank it God, this tree boweth to me down,  
I may now gather enow and eat my fill.

*Joseph.* Ow, I know well I have offended my God in Trinity,  
Speaking to my spouse these unkind words;  
For now I believe that my spouse beareth the King's  
Son of bliss, &c.

P. 91. *The Carnal and the Crane.* There is evidence of long tradition in the corruption of the text of this carol. It falls into two distinct sections: a generalised account of the Nativity, and a detailed account of the Flight into Egypt. Notwithstanding the disproportion of parts, there is no special reason for holding that they ever existed separately. The device of a theological discussion between two birds is a sufficiently mediæval introduction to a legend which was evidently popular in the fifteenth century, if we may judge from its frequent appearance as an illustration in *Books of Hours* of that period (cf. MSS. 17,280, 202b; 25,695, 114; 20,694, 65 in the British Museum. Doubtless there are many others). The incident of the "lovely lion" appears in the *Vita Christi*, MS. 29,434.

P. 96. *Gloria in Excelsis Deo.* With the exception of the three- or four-part song in the *Secunda Pastorum* (Towneley Plays), which I have included because of its general resemblance to the others, no shepherd carol has survived of a date earlier than the sixteenth century. However, the popularity of this aspect of the Nativity was very great during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, no doubt under the influence of the pastoral poetry which was then so fashionable. Many of these later compositions, often by well-known writers, are not true carols at all and are therefore relegated to Appendix III.

The shepherd carols show very great diversity of treatment and of merit.

P. 99. *As I rode, &c.* Apparently this is only another version of the preceding.

P. 99. *The Jolly Shepherd Wat.* This most realistic picture of the sixteenth-century shepherd suggests the similar handling of the theme in the mystery plays. See especially the *Secunda Pastorum*, where the homely gifts are a bob of cherries, a bird, and a ball, and the *Pageant of the Shearmen and the Tailors*, where a pipe, a hat, and mittens are offered. In the carol it is a pipe, scrip, tar-box, and skirt. Altogether, the poem reads

very much like a short lyrical account of such a scene, and the phrase "Joseph with the round cape" suggests that the author had a mental image derived either from the stage or from some picture.

P. 110. *Reges de Saba Venient*. The Adoration of the Magi was one of the most popular subjects for pictorial and dramatic representation in the Middle Ages; but carols on the theme are few, elaborate, and not especially good. The first two carols are versions of the same to the end of the eleventh stanza; then the second, with some confusions, appends the Slaughter of the Innocents.

P. 114. *Us*. Apparently the Kings are speaking. It would seem as if a stanza has been lost in which they began to relate their journey.

P. 115. *Into Bethlehem, &c*. These lines seem to be misplaced. They fit in between the seventh and eighth stanzas, pp. 113-14.

P. 115. *Sun in glass*. Cf. p. 184. In this case the allusion seems to be to a burning-glass (cf. a beautiful illumination showing one in MS. 14 E 1, fol. 3, fifteenth century); in the second reference the idea may be the same, or it may allude to the transmission of light through glass without injuring the glass.

P. 121. *Nunc gaudet Ecclesia*. The first two carols in this group name the Saints' days kept at Christmas. Of these St. Stephen's Day, now Boxing Day, seems to have been most celebrated. Cf. p. 221-22, where Stephen is already invoked in connection with terms that suggest the custom of asking for "boxes."

The carols in this group are of very unequal merit.

P. 121. *Thou merry man*. An allusion to the personification of the season, doubtless as a part of the mumming practices. Cf. *Dan Noel* and *Sir Christmas*.

P. 123. *St. Stephen was a Clerk*. The central episode of this very quaint carol (cf. *The Carnal and the Crane*, p. 91, where the Magi bring the news) was related about 1200 by Vincent of Beauvais, who, however, tells it of two men at a dinner-table, one of whom, carving a fowl, said that he would do it so thoroughly that not Peter nor our Lord Himself could put it together again. Whereupon the cock was feathered and crowed, and both men became lepers.

A similar idea is illustrated in a print at the head of a carol-sheet published in 1701. It shows the stable at Bethlehem, the animals being represented with Latin inscriptions coming from their mouths

as follows:—The cock: "Christus natus est." The raven: "Quando?" The cow: "Hac nocte." The ox: "Ubi?" The sheep: "Bethlehem."

P. 140. *My Love that Mourneth for Me*. This is an Easter carol obviously adapted from some earlier love-song. John Gwynneth was one of the Gentlemen of the Chapel to Henry VIII.

P. 142. *The Rose of Ryse*. Although this incomplete poem is distinctly labelled in the margin in a contemporary hand "A Christmas Carol," it seems to be rather political, alluding to the Tudor rose and the fleur-de-lys of France.

P. 143. *My Heart of Gold*. This is simply a nonsense rhyme or medley.

P. 145. *All under the Leaves*, &c. This is a traditional carol, which in spirit relates itself to the mystery plays of the Passion; but it has nothing to do with Christmas.

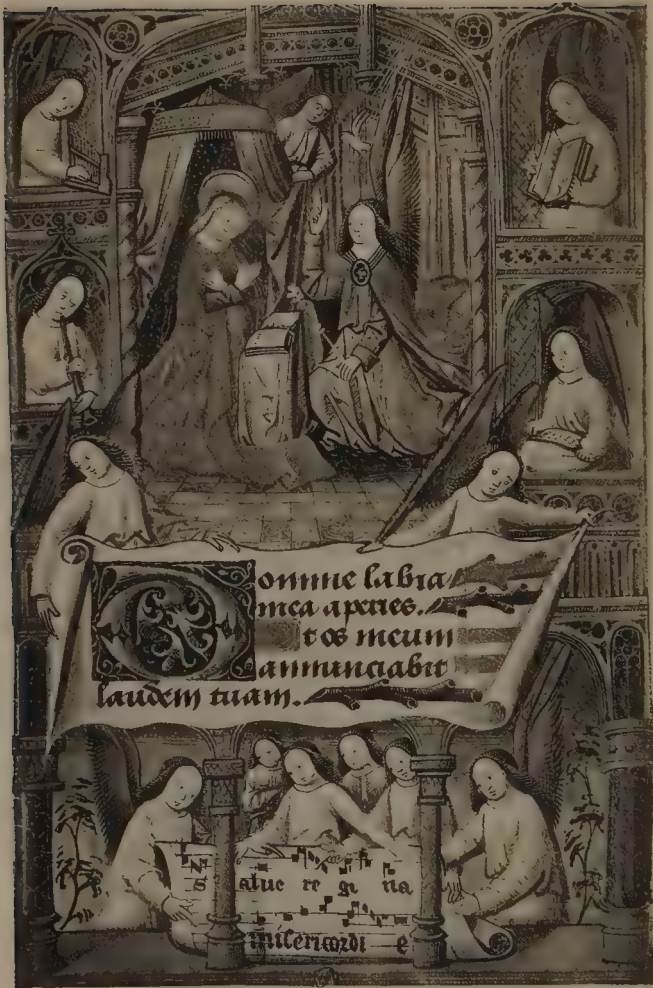
P. 146. *To-morrow shall be my Dancing-Day*. This traditional carol is perhaps a transformed love-song.

PART II  
CAROLS OF THE DIVINE  
MYSTERY









*Salve Regina*

## MIRABILE MISTERIUM

*Mirabile misterium!*<sup>1</sup>  
*The Son of God is man become*

Fifteenth Century.

A MARVELOUS thing I have mused in my mind,  
How that Veritas sprang right of the ground,  
And Justicia, for all mankind,  
From heaven to earth he came adown.

*Mirabile misterium!*  
*The Son of God is man become.*

Then Mary, that merciful may,  
Seeing man damned for his trespass  
Hath sent down Sapientia, the sooth to say;  
Man is redeemed and brought to grace.

*Mirabile misterium!*  
*The Son of God is man become.*

Celestial citizens, for us that you pray  
To Him that is both Alpha and O,  
That we may be savèd on Doomsday,  
And brought to that bliss He bought us to!

*Mirabile misterium!*  
*The Son of God is man become.*

<sup>1</sup> MS. Lansdowne 379, fol. 83.

*The Flower of Jesse*

About 1426.

John Awdlay?

THERE is a Flower sprung of a tree,  
 The root thereof is called Jesse ;  
 A Flower of price,  
 There is none such in Paradise !

This Flower is fair and fresh of hue ;  
 It fadeth never, but ever is new ;  
 The blissful branch this Flower on grew  
 Was Mary mild that bare Jesu.  
 A Flower of grace,  
 Against all sorrow it is solace !

The seed hereof was God's command,<sup>1</sup>  
 That God Himself sowed with His hand  
 In Bethlehem, in that holy land ;  
 Amidst her harbour there he <sup>2</sup> her found.  
 This blissful Flower  
 Sprang never but in Mary's bower.

When Gabriel this maiden met,  
 With " Ave Maria " he her gret ;<sup>3</sup>  
 Between them two this Flower was set,  
 And kept [It] was, no man shall wit ;  
 But on a day  
 In Bethlehem It gan spread and spray.

<sup>1</sup> *Text*: Godes sond.<sup>2</sup> The angel.<sup>3</sup> Greeted.

When that Flower began to spread,  
 And His blossom forth He led,<sup>1</sup>  
 Rich and poor in every stead,<sup>2</sup>  
 They marvelled how this Flower might spread,  
     And kinges three  
 That blissful Flower came to see.

Angels there came out of their tower  
 To look upon this freshly Flower,  
 How fair He was in His colour,  
 And how sweet in His savour,  
     And to behold  
 How such a Flower might spring in gold !

Of lily, of rose of ryse,<sup>3</sup>  
 Of primrose, and of fleur-de-lys,  
 Of all the flowers at my device,  
 That Flower of Jesse yet bears the price  
     As most of heal,  
 To slake our sorrows every deal.

I pray thee, flowers of this countree,  
 Wherever ye go, wherever ye be,  
 Hold up the Flower of good Jesse,  
 For your freshness and your beauty,  
     As fairest of all,  
 And ever was and ever shall.

<sup>1</sup> *Text*: to brede, *i.e.* to flourish.

<sup>3</sup> Branch.

<sup>2</sup> *Text*: of . . . lede.

*O Flos de Jesse Virgula*

Fifteenth Century.

*O Flos de Jesse virgula  
Laus Tibi sit gloria.*

ADAM our father was in bliss,  
 And for an apple of little price,  
 He lost the bliss of Paradise,  
*Pro sua superbia.*

And all that ever of him came  
 The right way to hellë nam,<sup>1</sup>  
 Both Isaac and Abraham,  
*Teste prophēcia.*

Then these prophets preached aforn,<sup>2</sup>  
 That a Child should be born  
 To buy what Adam had forlorn,  
*Sua morte propria.*

Moses first in his law told  
 A Child there should be born so bold  
 To buy again what Adam sold,  
*Sua nocte pessima.*

Isaac,<sup>3</sup> without leasing,  
 Prophetied in his preaching,  
 Of Jesse's root a Flower should spring  
*De virgine purica.*

• Took.

² Before.

³ For Isaiah.

Jeremy that was so ying,  
 Prophesied of His coming,  
 That is very Lord and King,  
*Summi Patris gracia.*

Furthermore, as I you tell,  
 Then propthesied Daniel  
 Of His coming he gan spell,  
*Gentibus in Judæa.*

When time came of God Almighty,  
 That would bring mankind to right,  
 In a maiden He gan light,  
*Que vocatur Maria.*

Now is He born, that blissful Child,  
 Of Mary mother, maiden mild ;  
 Fro the fiend He us shield,  
*Qui creavit omnia.*

Pray we to Him with all our mind,  
 That hath madë all mankind,  
 He bring us allë to good end,  
*In die novissima.*

*Adam Lay Ybounden*

Fifteenth Century.

ADAM lay ybounden,  
 Bounden in a bond ;  
 Four thousand winter  
 Thought he not too long.

And all was for an apple,  
 An apple that he took,  
 As clerkēs finden written  
 In their book.  
 Nor had the apple taken been,  
 The apple taken been,  
 Then had never our Lady  
 A-been heaven's queen.  
 Blessed be the time  
 That apple taken was!  
 Therefore we may singen  
*Deo gracias!*

*All that 'lieve<sup>1</sup> in Christian lay,  
 Worship every Christmas day*

Fifteenth Century.

A MAN<sup>2</sup> was the first guilt,  
 And therefore he was spilt;<sup>3</sup>  
 The prophecy was never [fulfilled],<sup>4</sup>  
*Till on the Christmas day.*

The first day that lily sprung,  
 Jesus Christ be us among,  
 Ever we thought it was too long,  
*Till on the Christmas day.*

It was dark, it was dim,  
 For men that livēd in great sin,  
 Lucifer was us all within,  
*Till on the Christmas day.*

<sup>1</sup> Believe.  
<sup>2</sup> Destroyed.

<sup>2</sup> O' man, *i.e.* Of man.  
<sup>4</sup> Text repeats spilt.

There was weeping, there was woe,  
 For every man to hell gan go.  
 It was little merry so,<sup>1</sup>  
*Till on the Christmas day.*

*Out of your Sleep Arise and Wake*

About 1450.

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell.*

Out of your sleep arise and wake,  
 For God mankind now hath ytake,  
 All of a maid without any make<sup>2</sup>;  
 Of all women she beareth the bell.

*Nowell.*

And through a maiden fair and wise  
 Now man is made of full great price ;  
 Now angels kneelen to man's service ;  
 And at this time all this befell.

*Nowell.*

Now man is brighter than the sun ;  
 Now man in heaven on high shall wone ;<sup>3</sup>  
 Blessed be God, this game is begun,  
 And His mother empress of hell.

*Nowell.*

That ever was thrall, now is he free ;  
 That ever was small, now great is she ;  
 Now shall God deem both thee and me  
 Unto His bliss, if we do well.

*Nowell.*

<sup>1</sup> *Text*: tho=then.

<sup>2</sup> Mate.

<sup>3</sup> Dwell.



Now man may to heaven wend ;  
 Now heaven and earth to him they bend ;  
 He that was foe now is our friend.

This is no nay that I you tell.

*Nowell.*

Now blessed Brother, grant us grace,  
 At Doomëday to see Thy face,  
 And in Thy court to have a place,  
 That we may there sing *nowell.*

*Nowell.*

*Exortum est in Love and Lysse*

About 1450.

*Nowell sing we, both all and some*

*Now Rex pacificus is come.*

*Exortum est in love and lysse.*<sup>1</sup>

Now Christ His grace He gan us gysse,<sup>2</sup>  
 And with His body us bought to bliss,

*Both all and some.*

*De Fructu ventris* of Mary bright,  
 Both God and man in her alight,  
 Out of disease He did us dight,

*Both all and some.*

*Puer natus* to us was sent,  
 To bliss us bought, fro bale us blent,<sup>3</sup>  
 And else to woe we had ywent,

*Both all and some.*

<sup>1</sup> Delight.

<sup>2</sup> Guide.

<sup>3</sup> Turned.

*Lux fulgebit* with love and light,  
 In Mary mild His pennon pight,<sup>1</sup>  
 In her took kind with manly might,  
*Both all and some.*

*Gloria Tibi* ay and bliss,  
 God unto His grace He us wysse,<sup>2</sup>  
 The rent of heaven that we not miss,  
*Both all and some.*

### *What Tidings?*

Fifteenth Century.

*"What tidings bringest thou, messenger,  
 Of Christiës birth this jolly day?"*

A BABE is born of high nature,  
 The Prince of peace that ever shall be;  
 Of heaven and earth He hath the cure,<sup>3</sup>  
 His lordship is eternity.  
*Such wondrous tidings you may hear,  
 That man is made now Godës peer,  
 Whom sin had made but fiendës prey.*

A wondrous thing doth now befall,  
 That King that formëd star and sun,  
 Heaven and earth and angels all,  
 Now in mankind is new begun.  
*Such wondrous tidings you may hear,  
 An infant of a single year,  
 That hath been ever and shall be aye.*

<sup>1</sup> Placed.

<sup>2</sup> Guide.

<sup>3</sup> Charge.

That seemeth strange to us to see,  
 This bird<sup>1</sup> that hath this Babe yborn,  
 And Lord conceived of high degree  
 A maiden is and was beforne.  
*Such wondrous tidings you may hear,  
 That maiden and mother are one in fere,  
 And she a lady of great array.*

That loveliest gan greet her Child :  
 "Hail, Son! Hail, Brother! Hail, Father dear!"  
 "Hail, Daughter!" He saith : "Hail, Sister. Hail,  
 Mother mild!"

This hailing was on quaint manner.  
*Such wondrous tidings you may hear,  
 That hailing was of so good cheer,  
 That man his pain is turned to play.*

*Tidings, tidings that be true :<sup>2</sup>  
 Sorrow is past and joy doth renew*

Fifteenth Century.

WHEREAS Adam caused by sin  
 Our nature thus to be mortal,  
*And that is true,*  
 A maiden's Son doth now begin  
 For to repoise us from that fall,  
*The name of Him is Christ Jesu.*

Some of our kind hath had such grace  
 That since His birth they did Him see,  
*And that is true,*

<sup>1</sup> Lady.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Lansdowne, 379, fol. 38.

Both Son and mother, face to face,  
 In the chief city called Jewry :  
*Both kings and shepherds, they it knew.*

The prophets thereof were nothing dismayed  
 Of that tidings beforne that they had told,  
*And that is true ;*  
 For now it is fallen right as they said :  
 A maiden clean a king hath born ;  
*For He is born to wear the purple hue.*

*This Babe to Us that now is Born*

Fifteenth Century.

*Now may we singen as it is  
 Quod puer natus est nobis.*

THIS Babe to us that now is born,  
 Wonderful works He hath [y]wrought  
 He would not lose what was forlorn,  
 But boldly again it bought ;  
*And thus it is  
 For sooth ywis,  
 He asketh nought but that is His.*

This bargain lovëd He right well,  
 The price was high and bought full dear.  
 Who would suffer and for us feel  
 As did that Prince withouten peer ?  
*And thus it is  
 For sooth ywis,  
 He asketh nought but that is His.*

His ransom for us hath ypaid ;  
 Good reason have we to be His.  
 Be mercy asked and He be prayed,  
 We may deserve the heavenly bliss.

*And thus it is  
 For sooth ywis,  
 He asketh nought but that is His.*

To some purpose God made man ;  
 I trust well to salvation.  
 What was His blood that from Him ran  
 But fence against damnation ?

*And thus it is  
 For sooth ywis,  
 He asketh nought but that is His.*

Almighty God in Trinity,  
 Thy mercy we pray with whole heart,  
 Thy mercy may all woe make flee  
 And dangerous dread from us to start.

*And thus it is  
 For sooth ywis,  
 He asketh nought but that is His.*

*Now sing we with joy and bliss :  
 Puer natus est nobis*

Before 1536.

MARY, flower of flowers all,  
 Hath born a child in an ox-stall,  
 That Lord and Prince is over us all ;  
*Puer natus est nobis.*

He was born on our lady,  
Without sin of her body,  
Godës own true Son truly ;

*Puer natus est nobis.*

By an apple of a tree,  
Bondmen all made were we,  
That Child was born to make us free ;

*Puer natus est nobis.*

That Child was done on the Rood,  
With His flesh and with His blood,  
For our help and for our good ;

*Puer natus est nobis.*

The third day He rose and to heaven went,  
Wit and wisdom He us sent,  
For to keep His commandment ;

*Puer natus est nobis.*

He shall come down at Doomësday,  
With bloody woundës, I you say,  
As He died on Good Friday ;

*Puer natus est nobis.*

Now pray we to that heaven[ly] King,  
To send us all His dear blessing,  
Shrift and housel at our ending.

*Puer natus est nobis.*

*This Day*

About 1450.

*An heavenly song, I dare well say,  
Is sung on earth to man this day.*

THIS is the song that ye shall hear,  
God is come from His empire,  
And is made man with high desire,  
*This day.*

He took our kind all of a maid,  
By ox and ass He was ylaid.  
Now is fulfilled that Scripture said,  
*This day.*

Ay I wonder this in my mind,  
That He that all may loose and bind,  
Would be laid by beasts unkind,  
*This day.*

He is a lord and by nature  
A maiden's breast He sucked full pure.  
Heaven and earth be in His cure,  
*This day.*

*Now is Well and All Things Aright*

Fifteenth Century.

*Now is well*<sup>1</sup> and all things aright,  
And Christ is come as a true knight;  
For our Brother is King of might,  
The fiend to fleme<sup>2</sup> and all his.  
Thus the fiend is put to flight,  
And all his boast abated is.

<sup>1</sup> *A pun upon Nowell.*<sup>2</sup> *To put to flight.*

Sithen it is, well [must] we do,  
 For there is none but one of two,  
 Heaven to get or heaven forego,  
     Other mean none there is ;  
 I counsel you, since it is so,  
     That you well do to win you bliss.

*Now is well* and all is well,  
 And right well, so have I bliss ;  
 And sithen all things are so well,  
     I rede <sup>1</sup> we do no more amiss.

*Make we merry in this feast,  
 For verbum caro factum est*

Fifteenth Century.

GODĒS Son for the love of man,  
 Flesh and blood of Mary He nam,<sup>2</sup>  
 As in the gospel saith Saint John,  
     *Verbum caro factum est.*

Of joy and mirth now may we sing,  
 God with man is now dwelling,  
 Holy Writ maketh now shewing,  
     *Deus homo natus est.*

God and man hath shewed His Child,  
 That hath us bought fro the devils wild ;  
 Him to worship now be we mild,  
     *Congaudere mihi.*

<sup>1</sup> Counsel.

<sup>2</sup> Took.



This Child His mother ever more,  
 Maiden she was, after and before,  
 And so said the prophè in his lore,  
*Verbo prophesye.*

*As I Went through a Garden Green*

Fifteenth Century.

As I went through a garden green,  
 I found an arbour made full new;  
 A fairer sight had I none seen,  
 On every tree sang a turtle true.  
 Therein a woman bright of hue,  
 She said in her song not least;  
 This was her carping as I knew:  
*Verbum caro factum est.*

To her song then took I intent,  
 She said a song with voice clear:  
 . . . . .  
 . . . . .  
 "This Prince that is without a peer  
 Is born and lain between twain beast,  
 I sing as thou might hear:<sup>1</sup>  
*Verbum caro factum est.*"

In that wone<sup>2</sup> forth gan I wende,<sup>3</sup>  
 A seemly song then heard I tho,<sup>4</sup>  
 Of three shepherds that were full hend:<sup>5</sup>  
*"Gloria in excelsis Deo."*

<sup>1</sup> *Text*: lere=learn.  
<sup>4</sup> Then.

<sup>2</sup> Abode.

<sup>3</sup> *Text*: "winde."

<sup>5</sup> Gentle; *text*: "hind."

I would not they had fared me fro,  
 Well fast after them gan I haste ;  
 They told me that they sungen so,  
 For *verbum caro factum est*.

Yet furthermore in that frith <sup>1</sup>  
 I saw three kingës come with crown,  
 I sped me fast to speak them with,  
 And to those lords I kneelëd down.  
 The kings courteous to me gan sound,  
 And saiden they would fare in haste ;  
 "To Bedlem bower now are we bound,  
 For *verbum caro factum est*."

This is as much as for to say,  
 As Godës Son become is flesh.  
 He was born this ilkë <sup>2</sup> day,  
 A blissful way us for to wych.<sup>3</sup>  
 That may now, withouten miss,<sup>4</sup>  
 Here I show both more and least,  
 For she was the cause ywis  
 Of *verbum caro factum est*.

Godës Son become is flesh,  
 That boot hath of all our bale,<sup>5</sup>  
 A blissful way us for to wych,  
 That maid Him harboured in her hale <sup>6</sup>  
 She bore that Lovely in her Sale,<sup>7</sup>  
 She held that Hend <sup>8</sup> within her breast ;  
 With true tongue she told the tale  
 For *verbum caro factum est*.

<sup>1</sup> Glade.    <sup>2</sup> Very.    <sup>3</sup> Show.    <sup>4</sup> Without mistake.    <sup>5</sup> Remedy  
 for all our trouble.    <sup>6</sup> Safe.    <sup>7</sup> Body?    <sup>8</sup> Text; Hind.

*Verbum caro* is to say  
 That Godës Son become is man ;  
 He was born this ilkē`day  
 To save us fro the fiend Sathan.  
 That may that is white as swan,  
 She fed that Lord upon her breast ;  
 Therefore I sing you as I can,  
*Verbum caro factum est.*

*Jesu, as Thou art our Saviour*

Fifteenth Century.

*Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, Jesu,*  
*Save us all through Thy virtue.*

JESU, as Thou art our Saviour  
 That Thou save us fro dolour !  
 Jesu is mine paramour.  
*Blessed be Thy name, Jesu.*

Jesu was born of a may,  
 Upon Christēmas Day,  
 She was may befor and ay,  
*Blessed be Thy name, Jesu.*

Three kingës comen fro Segent,  
 To Jesu Christ they brought present.  
 Lord God Omnipotent,  
*Save us all through Thy virtue.*

Jesu died and shed His blood  
 For all mankind upon the Rood ;  
 He grant us grace of happës<sup>1</sup> good,  
*I beseech Thee, sweet Jesu.*

Jesu, for Thy mother's sake,  
 Keep us fro the fiendës black ;  
 Against Him that we may wake ;  
*And save us all through Thy virtue.*

*Alleluia, alleluia*

Fifteenth Century.

Now may we mirthës make,  
 For us Jesus manhood hath take,<sup>2</sup>  
*De virgine Maria,*  
 Only for our sins' sake,  
*Alleluia.*

The King of kings now forth is brought,  
 Of a maid that sinnëd nought,  
*Res miranda,*  
 Neither in deed, neither in thought,  
*Alleluia.*

The angel of counsel that day was born,  
 As prophecies said beforne,  
*Sol de stella,*  
 For to save that<sup>3</sup> was forlorn,<sup>4</sup>  
*Alleluia.*

<sup>1</sup> Good fortunes.

<sup>2</sup> Taken.

<sup>3</sup> What.

<sup>4</sup> Lost.

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,  
Deo Patri sit gloria*

Fifteenth Century.

*Salvator mundi, Domine,*  
Father of heaven, blessed Thou be,  
Thou greetest a maid with an avé,  
*Que vocatur Maria.*

*Adesto nunc propicius,*  
Thou sendest Thy Son, sweet Jesus,  
Man to become for love of us,  
*Deo Patri sit gloria.*

*Ne mentem sompnus opprimat,*  
Betwixt an ox and an ass  
Christ Himself born He was  
*De virgine Maria.*

*Te, Reformator sensuum,*  
Both little and mickle, and all and some,  
Welcome the time that now is come,  
*Deo Patri sit gloria.*

*Gloria Tibi, Domine,*  
Three Persons in Trinity,  
Blessed may They allë be,  
*Deo Patri sit gloria.*

*Alleluia, alleluia,  
De virgine Maria*

Fifteenth Century.

*Salvator mundi, Domine,*  
Father of heaven, blessed Thou be,  
And Thy Son that cometh of Thee,  
*De virgine Maria.*

*Adesto nunc propicius,*  
He sent His Son, sweet Jesus ;  
A man became for love of us,  
*De virgine Maria.*

*Te, Reformator sensuum,*  
Little and mickle, more and some,  
Worship that Child that is come  
*De virgine Maria.*

*Gloria Tibi, Domine,*  
Three Persons in Trinity ;  
Worship that Child so free  
*De virgine Maria.*

*Te laudamus, Te Dominum  
Confitemur, Te eternum*

Temp. Henry VII. or VIII.

O BLESSED God in Trinity,  
Great cause we have to bless Thy name,  
That now wouldst send adown fro Thee  
The Holy Ghost to stint <sup>1</sup> our blame.  
*Te Deum laudamus.*

<sup>1</sup> Stop.

Sing we to God, Father Eternal,  
That liketh, to tune with our nature,  
The Son of Him Celestial  
Man to be born, our souls to cure.<sup>1</sup>

*Te Deum laudamus.*

All the saints in heaven on high,  
And all that be in earth also,  
Give laud and thanks devotedly,  
To God above and sing him to,

*Te Deum laudamus.*

*Nowell, el, el, el, el,  
I thank [it] a maiden every deal*

Fifteenth Century.

THE first day when Christ was born,  
There sprang a rose out of a thorn,  
To save mankind that was forlorn ;  
*I thank [it] a maiden every deal.*

In an ox-stall the Child was found,  
In poor clothing the Child was wound ;  
He suffered many a deadly wound ;  
*I thank [it] a maiden every deal.*

A garland of thorns on His head was set,  
A sharp spear to His heart was smet ;<sup>2</sup>  
The Jews saiden, " Take Thee that ! "  
*I thank [it] a maiden every deal.*

<sup>1</sup> God liketh His Son to be born man, to tune with our nature, for the saving of our souls.

<sup>2</sup> Smitten.

The Jews did cry their parliament ;  
 On the day of judgēment,  
 They were afear'd they should be shent.<sup>1</sup>

*I thank it a maiden every deal.*

To the pillar He was bound,  
 To His heart a spear was stung ;  
 For us He suffered a deadly wound.

*I thank it a maiden every deal.*

*Blessed may Thou be, sweet Jesus,  
 Qui hodie natus es nobis*

Before 1529.

Richard Smert.<sup>2</sup>

By Thy birth, Thou blessed Lord,  
 Is made of variance now one accord ;  
 Therefore we may sing[en] this :  
 Blessed may Thou be, sweet Jesus,  
*Qui hodie natus es nobis.*

Upon this high [and] blessed day,  
 Jesu in His mother's arms lay,  
 Wherefore to Him let us all say :  
 Blessed may Thou be, sweet Jesus,  
*Qui hodie natus es nobis.*

*Jesu, Fili virginis,  
 Miserere nobis*

Before 1529.

Richard Smert.

JESUS, of a maid Thou wouldst be born,  
 To save mankind that was forlorn,  
 And all for our miss,<sup>3</sup>  
*Miserere nobis.*

<sup>1</sup> Destroyed.

<sup>2</sup> See note.

<sup>3</sup> Sin.



Born Thou wert of Mary free,  
 And Thou didst die upon the Rood Tree,  
 And all for our miss,  
*Miserere nobis.*

*Jesu, Fili virginis,  
 Miserere nobis*

*Temp.* Henry VII. or VIII.

JESUS, of a maid Thou wouldst be born,  
 To save mankind that was forlorn,  
 And all for our sins,  
*Miserere nobis.*

Angels there were, mild of mood,  
 Sang to that sweet fode <sup>1</sup>  
 With joy and bliss.  
*Miserere nobis.*

In a cratch <sup>2</sup> was that Child laid,  
 Both ox and ass with Him played,  
 With joy and bliss.  
*Miserere nobis.*

Then for us He shed His blood,  
 And also He died on the Rood,  
 And for us ywis.  
*Miserere nobis.*

And then to hell He took the way,  
 To ransom them that there[in] lay,  
 With joy and bliss.  
*Miserere nobis.*

<sup>1</sup> Child.

<sup>2</sup> Crib.

*Jesu, Fili Dei,  
Miserere me*

Before 1529.

John Trouluffe and Richard Smert.

GLORIOUS God in Trinity,  
Well of man and [of] pity,  
Thus cried the woman of Canaan-y,  
*Miserere me.*

Thou came from heaven from Thy see,<sup>1</sup>  
To this world a man to be ;  
Therefore I cry devoutly,  
*Miserere me.*

As Thou hadst on her pity,  
So I pray Thou have on me,  
Glorious God in Trinity,  
*Miserere me.*

*To bliss God bring us, all and some,  
Christe Redemptor omnium*

Fifteenth Century.

IN Bethlehem, in that fair city,  
A Child was born of our Lady,  
Lord and prince that He should be,  
*A solis ortus cardine.*

Children were slain [full] great plenty,  
Jesus, for the love of Thee ;  
Let us never damnéd be,  
*Hostis Herodes impie.*

<sup>1</sup> Estate.

He was born of our Lady,  
 Without stain of her body,  
 Godës Son that sitteth `on high,  
*Iesu Salvator seculi.*

As the sun shineth thorough the glass,  
 So Jesus in her body was ;  
 To serve Him He gave us grace.  
*O lux beata trinitas !*

Now is born our Lord Jesus,  
 That made merry all [of] us ;  
 Be all merry in this house,  
*Exultet celum laudibus !*

*Into this world now is come  
 Christe Redemptor omnium*

Before 1536.

O WORTHY Lord and most of might,  
*Eterne rex altissime,*  
 Thee to honour me thinketh right,  
*Iam lucis orto sidere.*

As Thou art Lord of worthiness,  
*Conditor alme siderum,*  
 All us to bring out of darkness,  
*Christe Redemptor omnium.*

With beamës clear of righteousness,  
*Aurora lucis rutilat,*  
 In joy thereof with all gladness,  
*Vox clara ecce intonat.*

Now glorious Lord and worthy King,  
*Jesu Salvator seculi,*  
 Grant us Thy bliss everlasting,  
*Summi Largitor premii!*

*Verbum Patris hodie processit ex virgine*

Before 1536.

THE SON of the Father of heavenly bliss  
 Was born [on<sup>1</sup>] this day, I will not miss,  
 Man from thralldom to relieve and release,  
*Processit ex virgine.*

He was born of a virgin pure,  
 Not knowing a man, as I you assure ;  
 But all only by heavenly cure  
*Processit ex virgine.*

Gabriel the angel met  
 Mary kneeling in her closet ;  
 Now is fulfilled what said the prophet :  
*Processit ex virgine.*

Man, be glad, thou hast'a cause why  
 To thank our Lord God that is on high ;  
 For thee to suffer and for to die,  
*Processit ex virgine.*

<sup>1</sup> *Text: 35.*

*A blessed bird, as I you say,  
That died and rose on Good Friday*

Before 1536.

ON Christës day, I understand,  
An ear of wheat of a maid sprang,  
Thirty winters on earth to stand,  
To make us bread, all to His pay.<sup>1</sup>  
*A blessed bird, as I you say,  
That died and rose on Good Friday.*

This corn was reapen and laid to ground,  
Full sore beaten and fastë bound  
Unto a pillar with cordës round,  
At His fingers' ends the blood ran out that day.  
*A blessed bird, as I you say,  
That died and rose on Good Friday.*

This corn was reapen with great envy  
Upon the Mount of Calvary ;  
Token He showed on Shere-Thursday,  
Maundy He gave to His disciples there.  
*A blessed bird, as I you say,  
That died and rose on Good Friday.*

Jesu upon His body the Cross bare ;  
Water and blood came from Him there ;  
This corn was scourged all in fere ;  
Till it waxed blood-red.  
*A blessed bird, as I you say,  
That died and rose on Good Friday.*

<sup>1</sup> Liking.

A crown of thorns set on His head,  
 And He was done on the Rood,  
 And beaten till His body was bloody-red ;  
 Thus they beat Jesu, our debt to pay.  
*A blessed bird, as I you say,  
 That died and rose on Good Friday.*

*Now sing we, sing we : Gloria Tibi, Domine*

Before 1536.

CHRIST keep us all, as He well can,  
*A solis ortus cardine ;*  
 For He is both God and Man,  
*Qui natus est de virgine.*  
*Sing we, sing we : Gloria Tibi, Domine.*

As He is Lord, both day and night,  
*Venter puelle baiulat,*  
 So is Mary, mother of might,  
*Secreta que non noverat.*  
*Sing we, sing we : Gloria Tibi, Domine.*

The holy breast of chastity,  
*Verbo concepit Filium,*  
 So brought before the Trinity,  
*Ut castytatis lyllyum.*  
*Sing we, sing we : Gloria Tibi, Domine.*

Between an ox and an ass  
*Enixa est puerpera ;*  
 In poor clothing clothed He was,  
*Qui regnat super ethera.*  
*Sing we, sing we : Gloria Tibi, Domine.*

*Sing we all, for time it is :  
Mary hath borne the Fleur-de-lys*

Before 1536.

FOR His love that bought us all dear,  
Listen, lordings, that be here,  
And I well tell you in-fere,<sup>1</sup>

Whereof came the Fleur-de-lys.

*Sing we all, for time it is :  
Mary hath borne the Fleur-de-lys.*

On Christmas night, when it was cold,  
Our Lady lay among beastës bold,  
And there she bare Jesu, Joseph told,  
And thereof came the Fleur-de-lys.

*Sing we all, for time it is :  
Mary hath borne the Fleur-de-lys.*

Of that beareth witness Saint John,  
That it was of much renown ;  
Baptized he was in stream Jordan,  
And thereof came the Fleur-de-lys.

*Sing we all, for time it is :  
Mary hath borne the Fleur-de-lys.*

On Good Friday that Child was slain,  
Beaten with scourges and all to-flayn ;<sup>2</sup>  
That day he suffered mickle pain ;  
And thereof came the Fleur-de-lys.

*Sing we all, for time it is :  
Mary hath borne the Fleur-de-lys.*

<sup>1</sup> Together.

<sup>2</sup> Flayed.

*I pray you, be merry and sing with me  
In worship of Christ's Nativity*

Before 1536.

INTO this world, this day did come  
Jesu Christ, both God and man,  
Lord and Servant in one person,  
Born of the blessed virgin Mary.  
*I pray you, be merry and sing with me  
In worship of Christ's Nativity.*

He that was rich, without any need,  
Appeared in this world in right poor weed,  
To make us that were poor indeed,  
Rich without any need, truly.  
*I pray you, be merry and sing with me  
In worship of Christ's Nativity.*

A stable was His chamber ; a cratch<sup>1</sup> was His bed ;  
He had not a pillow to lay under His head  
With maiden's milk that babe was fed,  
In poor clothes was lapped the Lord Almighty.  
*I pray you, be merry and sing with me  
In worship of Christ's Nativity.*

A noble lesson here is us taught,  
To set all worldly riches at naught,  
But pray we that we may be thither brought,  
Where riches is everlastingly.  
*I pray you, be merry and sing with me  
In worship of Christ's Nativity.*

<sup>1</sup> Crib.



*Sing we with mirth, joy and solace  
In honour of this Christëmas*

Before 1536.

GLORIOUS God had great pity,  
How long man's soul in pain should be ;  
He sent His Son to make us free,  
Which for man's sake,  
Of a maiden pure,  
Against nature,  
Our flesh did take.

*Sing we with mirth, joy and solace  
In honour of this Christëmas !*

In Bethlehem our Saviour,  
Without food, in a manger  
Was born—it was his pleasure—  
Beastës among.

Angels heavenly  
Made harmony  
And joyful song.

*Sing we with mirth, joy and solace  
In honour of this Christëmas !*

The eighth day he was circumcised,  
Lest Moses' law should be despised ;  
A name to him they have devised,  
Call him Jesus ;

For Gabriel  
His mother did tell  
That it should be thus.

*Sing we with mirth, joy and solace  
In honour of this Christëmas.*

A new-made star, more large and clear  
 Than other stars, then did appear.  
 Fro Chaldea the philosophers in fere  
 Into Bethlehem it brought.

There it did stand  
 Still, till that they found  
 Him that they sought.

*Sing we with mirth, joy and solace  
 In honour of this Christëmas !*

The kingës brought their offering,  
 Gold that betokeneth a worthy king,  
 Incense, priesthood ; myrrh burying  
 For his manhood.

The angel come  
 Bade them go home  
 Not by Herod.

*Sing we with mirth, joy and solace  
 In honour of this Christëmas !*

Trust in God, man, and in none other ;  
 Mistrust Him not, He is thy brother ;  
 Thou hast a mediatrix of His mother.  
 Sigh for thy sin,

Cry mercy,  
 He will not deny  
 Thy soul to win.

*Sing we with mirth, joy and solace  
 In honour of this Christëmas !*

*Of the Birth of Christ*

1487-1568.

Miles Coverdale.

Now blessed be Thou, Christ Jesu,  
 Thou art man born this is true ;  
 The angels made a merry noise,  
 Yet have we more cause to rejoice,  
*Kirieleyson.*

The blessed Son of God only,  
 In a crib full poor did lie,  
 With our poor flesh and our poor blood,  
 Was clothed that everlasting Good,  
*Kirieleyson.*

He that made heaven and earth of nought,  
 In our flesh hath our health brought,  
 For our sake made He Himself full small,  
 That reigneth Lord and King over all,  
*Kirieleyson.*

Eternal light doth now appear,  
 To the world both far and near,  
 It shineth full clear even at midnight,  
 Making us children of his light,  
*Kirieleyson.*

The Lord Christ Jesus, God's Son dear,  
 Was a guest and a stranger here,  
 Us for to bring from misery,  
 That we might live eternally,  
*Kirieleyson.*

Into this world right poor came He,  
 To make us rich in mercy,  
 Therefore would He our sins forgive,  
 That we with Him in heaven might live,  
*Kirieleyson.*

All this did He for us freely,  
 For to declare His great mercy;  
 All christendom be merry therefore,  
 And give Him thanks ever more,  
*Kirieleyson.*

*Lully, lulley, lully, lulley,  
 The falcon hath borne my make<sup>1</sup> away<sup>2</sup>*

Before 1536.

He bare him up, he bare him down,  
 He bare him into an orchard brown.

In that orchard there was an hall,  
 That was hangēd with purple and pall.

And in that hall there was a bed,  
 It was hangēd with gold so red.

And in that bed there lieth a knight,  
 His woundēs bleeding, day and night.

By that bedside kneeleth a may,  
 And she weepeth both night and day.

And by that bedside there standeth a stone,  
*Corpus Christi* written thereon.

<sup>1</sup> Mate.

<sup>2</sup> See note.

*All Bells in Paradise*<sup>1</sup>

Traditional.

OVER yonder's a park, which is newly begun,  
*All bells in Paradise, I heard them a-ring ;*  
 Which is silver on the outside and gold within,  
*And I love sweet Jesus above all thing.*

And in that park there stands a hall,  
*All bells in Paradise I heard them a-ring ;*  
 Which is covered all over with purple and pall,  
*And I love sweet Jesus above all thing.*

And in that hall there stands a bed,  
*All bells in Paradise I heard them a-ring ;*  
 Which is hung all round with silk curtains so red,  
*And I love sweet Jesus above all thing.*

And in that bed there lies a knight,  
*All bells in Paradise I heard them a-ring ;*  
 Whose wounds they do bleed by day and by night,  
*And I love sweet Jesus above all thing.*

At that bedside there lies a stone,  
*All bells in Paradise I heard them a-ring ;*  
 Which is our blessed Virgin Mary then kneeling on,  
*And I love sweet Jesus above all thing.*

At that bed's foot there lies a hound,  
*All bells in Paradise I heard them a-ring ;*  
 Which is licking the blood as it daily runs down,  
*And I love sweet Jesus above all thing.*

<sup>1</sup> See note.

At that bed's head there grows a thorn,  
*All bells in Paradise I heard them a-ring ;*  
 Which was never so blossomed since Christ was born,  
*And I love sweet Jesus above all thing.*

*Remember, O thou Man*<sup>1</sup>

Before 1567.

REMEMBER, O thou man,  
 O thou man, O thou man !  
 Remember, O thou man !  
 Thy time is spent ;  
 Remember, O thou man, how thou art dead  
 and gone,  
 And I did what I can, therefore repent ;  
 Remember Adam's fall,  
 O thou man, O thou man !

Remember Adam's fall,  
 From heaven to hell ;  
 Remember Adam's fall,  
 How we were condemned all,  
 In hell perpetual  
 Therefore to dwell,  
 Remember God's goodness,  
 O thou man, man, O thou man !

Remember God's goodness,  
 And His promise made,  
 Remember God's goodness,  
 How He sent His Son doubtless,  
 Our sins for to redress,  
 Be not afraid.

<sup>1</sup> Ravenscroft's *Melismata, Musical Phansies, &c.*, 1611. See note.

The angels all did sing,  
 O thou man, O thou man !  
 The angels all did sing,  
 Upon the shepherds' hill.  
 The angels all did sing,  
 Praises to our heavenly king,  
 And peace to man living,  
 With a good will.

The shepherds amaz'd was,  
 O thou man, O thou man !  
 The shepherds amaz'd was,  
 To hear the angels sing ;  
 The shepherds amaz'd was,  
 How it should come to pass,  
 That Christ our Messias,  
 Should be our King.

To Bethlehem did they go,  
 O thou man, O thou man !  
 To Bethlehem did they go,  
 The shepherds three ;  
 To Bethlehem did they go,  
 To see whe'er it were so or no,  
 Whether Christ were born or no,  
 To set man free.

As the angels before did say,  
 O thou man, O thou man !  
 As the angels before did say,  
 So it came to pass ;

As the angels before did say,  
 They found a babe where it lay,  
 In a manger wrapped in hay,  
     So poor he was.

In Bethlehem he was born,  
 O thou man, O thou man!  
 In Bethlehem he was born,  
 For mankind's sake.  
 In Bethlehem he was born,  
 For us that were forlorn,  
 And therefore took no scorn,  
     Our flesh to take.

Give thanks to God always,  
 O thou man, O thou man!  
 Give thanks to God always,  
 With heart most joyfully;  
 Give thanks to God always,  
 For this our happy day;  
 Let all men sing and say,  
     Holy holy.

*For Christmas Day*

1584 ?-1659.

T. Pestell.

FAIREST of morning lights, appear,  
 Thou blest and gaudy day,  
 On which was born our Saviour dear;  
 Arise and come away.

This day prevents His day of doom;  
 His mercy now is nigh;  
 The mighty God of Love is come,  
 The Dayspring from on high.



Behold, the great Creator makes  
 Himself an house of clay,  
 A robe of virgin-flesh He takes  
 Which He will wear for aye.

Hark, hark, the wise Eternal Word  
 Like a weak infant cries ;  
 In form of servant is the Lord,  
 And God in cradle lies.

This wonder struck the world amazed,  
 It shook the starry frame ;  
 Squadrons of spirits stood and gazed,  
 Then down in troops they came.

Glad shepherds ran to view this sight ;  
 A quire of angels sings ;  
 And eastern sages with delight  
 Adore this King of kings.

*Christmas Day*

1588-1667.

George Wither.

As on the night before this happy morn,  
 A blessed angel unto shepherds told,  
 Where (in a stable) He was poorly born,  
 Whom nor the earth nor heaven of heavens can hold :  
 Through Bethlehem rung  
 This news at their return :  
 Yea, angels sung  
 That God with us was born ;  
 And they made mirth because we should not mourn.

This angel-carol sing we, then,  
 To God on high all glory be,  
 For peace on earth bestoweth He,  
 And showeth favour unto men.

This favour Christ vouchsafed for our sake ;  
 To buy us thrones, He in a manger lay ;  
 Our weakness took, that we His strength might take ;  
 And was disrobed that He might us array ;  
     Our flesh He wore,  
     Our sin to wear away ;  
     Our curse He bore,  
     That we escape it may ;  
 And wept for us that we might sing for aye.  
 With angels, therefore, sing again,  
 To God on high all glory be ;  
 For peace on earth bestoweth He,  
 And showeth favour unto men.

*Born is the Babe*<sup>1</sup>

Early Seventeenth Century.

BORN is the Babe, the only Branch of Peace,  
 The sweet Messiah, God's most holy Son,  
 Whose death our life, whose wounds our joys increase,  
 Who wrought our weal when all our hope was gone,  
 Whose grief our joy, whose lack relieved our loss,  
*Who cured our care by suffering on the Cross.*

Born is the Lamb, the Sacrifice of Joy,  
 The Spotless Person, Ransom of our sin,

<sup>1</sup> MS. Additional 7790, fols. 6b, 7.

The sweet Samaritan that cured all annoy,  
 The Son (in) whom the Sire delighted in,  
 The Haven of Peace when worldly troubles toss,  
*Who cured our care by suffering on the Cross.*

Born is the Shepherd careful of his sheep,  
 The Light of Glory bright of majesty,  
 The Father's Power who hath our sins in keep,  
 The very Beam of true Divinity,  
 Whom praise we still when worldly troubles toss,  
*Who cured our care by suffering on the Cross.*

*Sun of Righteousness*<sup>1</sup>

1632.

ALL this night shrill chanticleer,  
 Day's proclaiming trumpeter,  
 Claps his wings and loudly cries,  
 "Mortals, mortals, wake and rise!  
     See a wonder  
     Heaven is under,  
 From the earth is risen a Sun  
 Shines all night though day be done.

Wake, O earth, wake everything,  
 Wake and hear the joy I bring,  
 Wake and joy; for all this night  
 Heaven and every twinkling light,  
     All amazing,  
     Still stand gazing,  
 Angels, powers and all that be,  
 Wake and joy this Sun to see.

<sup>1</sup> *A Handfull of Celestiall Flowers*, manuscib'd by R. Cr. (Ralph Crane).

Hail, O Sun, O blessed Light,  
 Sent into the world by night,  
 Let thy rays and heavenly powers  
 Shine in this dark soul of ours ;  
     For most duly  
     Thou art truly  
 God and man we do confess.  
 Hail, O Sun of Righteousness ! ”

*The Moon Shone Bright ; or, The Bellman*

THE moon shone bright, and the stars gave a  
 light,  
 A little before it was day,  
 Our Lord, our God, he called on us,  
 And bid us awake and pray.

Awake, awake, good people all,  
 Awake, and you shall hear,  
 Our Lord, our God, died on the Cross  
 For us whom He loved so dear.

O fair, O fair Jerusalem,  
 When shall I come to thee ?  
 When shall my sorrows have an end,  
 Thy joy that I may see ?

The fields were green as green could be,  
 When from His glorious seat  
 Our Lord, our God, He watered us,  
 With His dew so sweet.

And for the saving of our souls,  
 Christ died upon the Cross ;  
 We ne'er shall do for Jèsus Christ  
 As He has done for us.

The life of man is but a span,  
 And cut down in its flower ;  
 We are here to-day and to-morrow are gone  
 We are all dead in an hour.

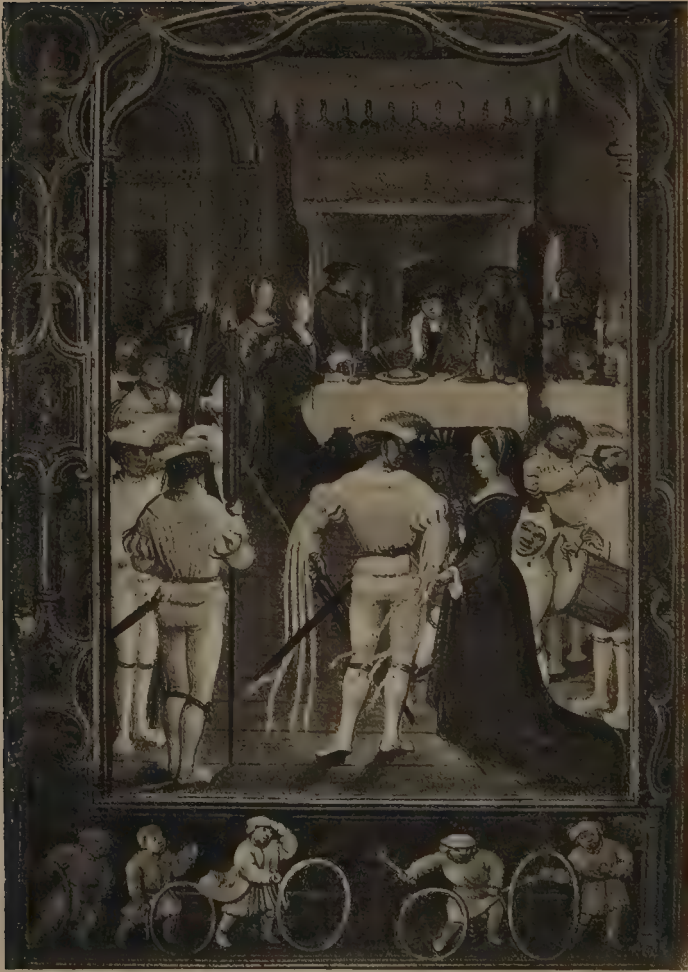
O pray teach your children, man,  
 The while that you are here ;  
 It will be better for your soul  
 When your corpse lies on the bier.

To-day you may be alive, dear man,  
 Worth many a thousand pound ;  
 To-morrow may be dead, dear man,  
 And your body laid under ground.

With one turf at your head, O man,  
 And another at your feet,  
 Thy good deeds and thy bad, O man,  
 Will all together meet.

My song is done, I must be gone,  
 I can stay no longer here.  
 God bless you all, both great and small,  
 And send you a Happy New Year !





*Make we merry.*

## IN DULCI IUBILO<sup>1</sup>

### *Be Merry*

Fifteenth Century.

*Be merry, be merry, I pray you, be merry every one.*

A PRINCIPAL point of charity,  
It is merry to be  
In Him that is but One.

*Be merry, be merry, I pray you, be  
merry every one.*

For He that is but One in bliss  
To us hath sent His son, ywis,<sup>2</sup>  
To save us from our fone.<sup>3</sup>

*Be merry, be merry, I pray you, be  
merry every one.*

For of a maiden a Child was born,  
To save mankind that was forlorn.  
Man, think thereon.

*Be merry, be merry, I pray you, be  
merry every one.*

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> Verily.

<sup>3</sup> Foes.



Now Mary, for thy Son His sake,  
 Save them all that mirth do make,  
 And hold the longest on.

*Be merry, be merry, I pray you, be  
 merry every one.*

*Now Make we Merry, All and Some*

Fifteenth Century.

Now make we merry, all and some,  
 For Christmas now is come

*That hath no peer.*

*Sing we all in fere.*

*Now joy and bliss*

*They shall not miss*

*That make good cheer.*

Now God Almighty down hath sent  
 The Holy Ghost to be present,  
 To light on Mary maiden verament,  
 That bare the Son of God with good intent,

*That hath no peer.*

*Sing we all in fere.*

*Now joy and bliss*

*They shall not miss*

*That make good cheer.*

Now God's Son omnipotent  
 In Mary mild He here hath ta'en  
 Flesh and blood, for He hath meant  
 Man to restore unto His gain,

*That hath no peer.  
Sing we all in fere.  
Now joy and bliss  
They shall not miss  
That make good cheer.*

To Mary mild our hearts be bent,  
That blissful lady so be-kent,<sup>1</sup>  
To pray that we be not undone,  
Through Jesus Christ her gentle Son,  
*That hath no peer.  
Sing we all in fere.  
Now joy and bliss  
They shall not miss  
That make good cheer.*

### *The Five Joys*

Fifteenth Century.

I MAY sing of a may,  
Of joys five and mirthës most.  
The first joy, as I you tell,  
With Mary met Saint Gabriel.  
“Hail, Mary, I greet thee well  
*With Father, Son and Holy Ghost.*”

The second joy, in good fay,  
Was on Christmas Day;  
Born He was of a may  
*With Father, Son and Holy Ghost.*

<sup>1</sup> Be-kent=well known; *text*: be bent.

The third joy, withouten strife,  
 That blissful Birth was full rife,  
 When He rose fro death to life,  
*With Father, Son and Holy Ghost.*

The fourth joy, in good fay,  
 Was upon Hallowed Thursday,  
 He rose to heaven in rich array,  
*With Father, Son and Holy Ghost.*

The fifth joy, withouten dene,<sup>1</sup>  
 In heaven He crowned His mother clean,  
 That was well with the eye a-seen,<sup>2</sup>  
*With Father, Son and Holy Ghost.*

*In Dulci Iubilo*

About 1567.

John Wedderburn.

Now let us sing with mirth and joy,  
 Our heart's consolation  
 Lies *in præsepio*,  
 And shines as the sun,  
*Matris in gremio.*  
 Alpha is and O, Alpha is and O.  
*O Jesu parvule,*  
 I thirst sore after Thee,  
 Comfort my heart and mind,  
*O Puer optime!*

God of all grace so kind,  
*Et Princeps Gloriæ,*  
*Trabe me post Te,*

<sup>1</sup> Doubt.

<sup>2</sup> *Text*; wol wil the eyr a sene.

*Trabe me post Te.*

*Ubi sunt gaudia ;*

In any place but there  
Where that the angels sing,

*Nova cantica,*

But and the bells ring,

*In Regis curia.*

God if I were there,

God if I were there !

*Now let us Sing with Joy and Mirth*

About 1567.

John Wedderburn.

Now let us sing with joy and mirth,  
In honour of our Lord's birth,  
For His life and humanity,  
Who gave Himself for us to die.

By Adam we were all forlorn,  
But now Christ Jesus till us is born,  
Has freed us fra captivity,  
And vanquished has our enemy.

When He was born nane did Him snib,  
To lie richt law intill ane crib ;  
Ane ox, ane ass, richt tenderly  
Refreshit His humanity.

His Godheid needeth na support  
For it was full of all comfort,  
Whilk equal is in all degree,  
Unto His Father's majesty.

The angels sang with merryness,  
 Unto the herds, both mair and less,  
 And bade them of good comfort be,  
 For Christës new Nativity.

For ye were all at Godës horn,  
 This Babe, to you that now is born,  
 Sall make you safe, and for you die,  
 And you restore to liberty.

This Babe for you did shed His blude,  
 And tholit death upon the Rood ;  
 And for His great humanity,  
 Exaltit is His Majesty.

And now He is our advocate,  
 Praying for us, baith ere and late ;  
 This can the Scripture verify,  
 In sa far as ane man is He.

Therefore, all tide and time and hour,  
 Pass unto Him as Mediator  
 Betwix the Father's wrath and thee,  
 Of sin if thou would cleansëd be.

For He has promised with His heart  
 To all sinners that will revert  
 And fra their sinful life will flee,  
 Sall ring with Him eternally.

To God the Father must be gloir,  
 And also to Christ forever more ;  
 The Holy Ghaist must blissit be,  
 Worker of this Nativity.

*All the merrier is that place,  
The sun of grace Him shineth<sup>1</sup> in*

Fifteenth Century.

THE sun of grace Him shineth<sup>1</sup> in,  
On a day when it was morrow,  
When our Lord God born was,  
Without sin or sorrow.

The sun of grace Him shineth in,  
On a day when it was prime,  
When our Lord God born was ;  
So well He knew His time.

The sun of grace Him shineth in,  
On a day when it was noon,  
When our Lord God born was,  
And on the Rood [y]done.

The sun of grace Him shineth in,  
On a day when it was undern,  
When our Lord God born was,  
And to the heart [y]stungen.<sup>2</sup>

*Man, be joyful and mirth thou make,  
For Christ is made man for thy sake*

Temp. Henry VII. or VIII.

MAN, be merry, I thee rede,  
But beware what mirths thou make ;  
Christ is clothed in thy weed,  
And He is made man for thy sake.

<sup>1</sup> *Text*: schynit. See note.

<sup>2</sup> Pierced.

He came fro His Father's seat,  
 Into this world to be thy make ;<sup>1</sup>  
 Man, beware how thou Him treat,  
 For He is made man for thy sake.

Look thou mercy ever cry,  
 Now and alway, rathe and late ;  
 And He will set thee wonder high,  
 For He is made man for thy sake.

*For Christmas Day*

1574-1656.

Bishop Hall.

IMMORTAL Babe, who this dear day  
 Did'st change Thine heaven for our clay,  
 And did'st with flesh Thy Godhead veil,  
 Eternal Son of God, all hail !

Shine, happy star ; ye angels, sing  
 Glory on high to heaven's King ;  
 Run, shepherds, leave your nightly watch,  
 See heaven come down to Bethlehem's cratch.

Worship, ye sages of the east,  
 The King of gods in meanness dressed ;  
 O blessed maid, smile and adore  
 The God thy womb and arms have bore.

Star, angels, shepherds, and wise sages,  
 Thou virgin glory of all ages,  
 Restor'd frame of heaven and earth,  
 Joy in your dear Redeemer's birth !

<sup>1</sup> Comrade.

*Cast off all Doubtful Care*<sup>1</sup>

1589.

CAST off all doubtful care,  
 Exile and banish tears ;  
 To joyful news divine  
 Lend us your listening ears.

An earthly tree a heavenly fruit it bare,  
 A case of clay contained a crown immortal,  
 A crown of crowns, a King whose cost and care  
 Redeemed poor man, whose race before was thrall  
 To death, to doom, to pains of everlasting,  
 By His sweet death, scores, stripes and often fasting.

A star above the stars, a sun of light,  
 Whose blessed beams this wretched earth bespread  
 With hope of heaven and of God's Son the sight,  
 Which in our flesh and sinful soul lay dead.  
 O faith, O hope, O joys renowned forever,  
 O lively death that deathless shall persevere !

Then let us sing the lullabies of sleep  
 To this sweet Babe, born to awake us all  
 From drowsy sin that made old Adam weep,  
 And by his fault gave to mankind the fall.  
 For lo ! this day, the birthday, day of days,  
 Summons our songs to give Him laud and praise.

<sup>1</sup> Byrd's *Songs of Sundry Natures*.



*This Day Christ was Born*<sup>1</sup>

1611.

THIS day Christ was born,  
 This day our Saviour did appear,  
 This day the angels sing in earth,  
 This day archangels are glad ;  
 This day the just rejoice, saying :  
 Glory be to God on high,  
 Allelujah !

*A Christmas Carol*

1592-1644.

Francis Quarles,<sup>2</sup>

GLORY to God on high, and jolly mirth  
 'Twixt man and man, and peace on earth !  
 This night a Child is born ;  
 This night a Son is given ;  
 This Son, this Child  
 Hath reconciled  
 Poor man that was forlorn,  
 And the angry God of heaven.  
*Hosanna, sing Hosanna !*

Now, now that joyful day,  
 That blessed hour is come,  
 That was foretold  
 In days of old,  
 Wherein all nations may  
 Bless, bless the virgin's womb.  
*Hosanna, sing Hosanna !*

<sup>1</sup> Byrd's *Psalms, Songs, and Sonnets*.<sup>2</sup> *Éclogue v* (*The Shepherd's Oracles*).

Let heaven triumph above,  
 Let earth rejoice below ;  
 Let heaven and earth  
 Be filled with mirth,  
 For peace and lasting love  
 Atones your God and you.  
*Hosanna, sing Hosanna !*

*There Comes a Ship*

About 1550.

THERE comes a ship far sailing then,  
 Saint Michael was the steersman,  
 Saint John sat in the horn ;  
 Our Lord harped, our Lady sang,  
 And all the bells of heaven they rang,  
 On Christ's Sunday at morn.

*I Saw Three Ships*<sup>1</sup>

Traditional.

I SAW three ships come sailing in  
 On Christmas day, on Christmas day ;  
 I saw three ships come sailing in  
 On Christmas day in the morning.

And what was in those ships all three,  
 On Christmas day, on Christmas day ?  
 And what was in those ships all three,  
 On Christmas day in the morning ?

<sup>1</sup> See note.

Our Saviour Christ and His Lady,  
 On Christmas day, on Christmas day ;  
 Our Saviour Christ and His Lady,  
 On Christmas day in the morning.

Pray whither sailed those ships all three,  
 On Christmas day, on Christmas day ?  
 Pray whither sailed those ships all three,  
 On Christmas day in the morning ?

O they sailed into Bethlehem,  
 On Christmas day, on Christmas day ;  
 O they sailed into Bethlehem,  
 On Christmas day in the morning.

And all the bells on earth shall ring,  
 On Christmas day, on Christmas day ;  
 And all the bells on earth shall ring,  
 On Christmas day in the morning.

And all the angels in Heaven shall sing,  
 On Christmas day, on Christmas day ;  
 And all the angels in Heaven shall sing,  
 On Christmas day in the morning.

And all the souls on earth shall sing,  
 On Christmas day, on Christmas day ;  
 And all the souls on earth shall sing,  
 On Christmas day in the morning.

Then let us all rejoice amain,  
 On Christmas day, on Christmas day ;  
 Then let us all rejoice amain,  
 On Christmas day in the morning.

*Christ's Nativity*<sup>1</sup>

1650-65.

Henry Vaughan.

AWAKE, glad heart! get up and sing!  
 It is the birthday of thy King.  
     Awake! Awake!  
     The sun doth shake  
 Light from his locks, and all the way  
 Breathing perfumes, doth spice the day.

Awake! awake! hark how th' wood rings,  
 Winds whisper, and the busy springs  
     A concert make.  
     Awake! Awake!  
 Man is their high priest, and should rise  
 To offer up the sacrifice.

I would I were some bird, or star,  
 Fluttering in woods, or lifted far  
     Above this inn  
     And road of sin;  
 Then either star or bird should be  
 Shining or singing still to Thee.

I would I had in my best part  
 Fit rooms for Thee! or that my heart  
     Were so clean as  
     Thy manger was!  
 But I am all filth, and obscene;  
 Yet, if Thou wilt, Thou can'st make me clean.

<sup>1</sup> *Silex Scintillans.*

Sweet Jesu! will then. Let no more  
This leper haunt and soil Thy door!  
Cure him, ease him,  
O release him!  
And let once more, by mystic birth,  
The Lord of life be born in earth.

PART III  
CAROLS OF YULETIDE  
FESTIVITY

PROFACÉ

*Profacé*

*Temp.* Henry VII. or VIII.

*Profacé*,<sup>1</sup> welcome, welcome !  
This time is born a Child of grace,  
That for us mankind<sup>2</sup> hath take.

*Profacé.*

A king's son and an emperour  
Is come out of a maiden's tower,  
With us to dwell with great honour.

*Profacé.*

This holy time of Christēmas,  
All sorrow and sin we should release,  
And cast away all heaviness.

*Profacé.*

The good lord of this place entire,  
Saith welcome to all that now appear,  
Unto such fare as ye find here.

*Profacé.*

<sup>1</sup> Much good may it do you !

<sup>2</sup> Man's nature.

Welcome be this new year!  
 And look ye all be of good cheer.  
 Our Lord God be us ever near!<sup>1</sup>

*Proface.*

*In Die Nativitatis*

*Temp.* Henry VII. or VIII.

“*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell.*”

“Who is there that singeth so *nowell, nowell, nowell?*”

“I am here, Sir Christēmas.”

“Welcome, my lord Sir Christēmas,  
 Welcome to us all, both more and less,  
*Come near, nowell.*”

“*Dieus wous garde, bewe sieurs,*<sup>2</sup> tidings I you bring:  
 A maid hath borne a child full ying,  
 The which causeth [you] for to sing,  
*Nowell.*”

“Christ is now born of a pure maid,  
 In an ox-stall he is laid,  
 Wherefore sing we alle at a brayde,<sup>3</sup>  
*Nowell.*”

“*Bevvex bien par tutte la company,*  
 Make good cheer and be right merry,  
 And sing with us now joyfully,  
*Nowell.*”

<sup>1</sup> *Text*: at our dewre=need.

<sup>2</sup> *Elsewhere* byewe syre.

<sup>3</sup> In unison.

*Good Day, Good Day*

Fifteenth Century.

*Good day, good day,  
My Lord Sir Christēmas, good day!*

Good day, Sir Christēmas our King,  
For every man, both old and ying,  
Is glad of your coming.

*Good day.*

Godēs Son so much of might  
From heaven to earth down is light  
And born is of a maid so bright.

*Good day.*

Heaven and earth and also hell  
And all that ever in them dwell,  
Of your coming they be full snell.

*Good day.*

All manner of mirthēs we will make,  
And solace to our heartēs take,  
My seemly lordē for your sake.

*Good day.*

*What cheer? Good cheer! Good cheer! Good cheer!  
Be merry and glad this good New Year.*

Before 1536.

LIFT up your heartēs and be glad!  
In Christēs birth the angel bade;  
Say each to other, if any be sad:  
*What cheer? Good cheer! Good cheer! Good cheer!  
Be merry and glad this good New Year.*



Now the King of heaven His birth hath take,  
 Joy and mirth we ought to make!  
 Say each to other, for his sake:  
*What cheer? Good cheer! Good cheer! Good cheer!*  
*Be merry and glad this good New Year.*

I tell you all with heart so free,  
 Right welcome ye be [all] to me.  
 Be glad and merry for charity!  
*What cheer? Good cheer! Good cheer! Good cheer!*  
*Be merry and glad this good New Year.*

The goodman of this place in fere<sup>1</sup>  
 You to be merry he prayeth you here;  
 And with good heart he doth to you say:  
*What cheer? Good cheer! Good cheer! Good cheer!*  
*Be merry and glad this good New Year.*

*Make we merry, both more and less,  
 For now is the time of Christēmas*

Before 1536.

LET no man come into this hall,  
 Groom, page nor yet marshall,  
 But that some sport he bring withal,  
*For now is the time of Christēmas.*

If that he say he cannot sing,  
 Some other sport then let him bring,  
 That it may please at this feasting,  
*For now is the time of Christēmas.*

<sup>1</sup> Company.

If he say he can naught do,  
 Then for my love ask him no mo,  
 But to the stocks then let him go,  
*For now is the time of Christēmas.*

*Now Christmas Draweth Near*

1558-1626.

Nicholas Breton.

Now Christmas draweth near, and most men make good cheer,  
 With heigh-ho, care away !  
 I, like a sickly mome, in drowsy dumps at home,  
 Will naught but fast and pray.

Some sing and dance for life, some card and dice as rife,  
 Some use old Christmas games ;  
 But I, oh wretched wight ! in dole both day and night,  
 Must dwell ; the world so frames.

In Court, what pretty toys, what fine and pleasant joys,  
 To pass the time away !  
 In country naught but care ; sour cheese-curds, chiefest fare ;  
 For wine, a bowl of whey.

For every dainty dish, of flesh or else of fish,  
 And for your drink in Court,  
 A dish of young fried frogs, sod houghs of meazled hogs,  
 A cup of small tap wort.

And for each courtly sight, each show that may delight  
 The eye or else the mind ;  
 In country thorns and brakes, and many miry lakes,  
 Is all the good you find.

And for fine enteries, halls, chambers, galleries,  
 And lodgings many mo ;  
 Here dessert woods and plains, where no delight remains,  
 To walk in to and fro.

In Court, for to be short, for every pretty sport  
 That may the heart delight ;  
 In country many a grief, and small or no relief,  
 To aid the wounded wight.

And in this desert place, I, wretch ! in woeful case,  
 This merry Christmas time,  
 Content myself perforce to rest my careful corse,  
 And so I end my rhyme.

*The Christmas Now is Past*

1558-1626.

Nicholas Breton.

THE Christmas now is past, and I have kept my fast,  
 With prayer every day ;  
 And, like a country clown, with nodding up and down,  
 Have passed the time away.

As for old Christmas games, or dancing with fine dames,  
 Or shows, or pretty plays ;  
 A solemn oath I swear, I came not where they were,  
 Not all these holy days.

I did not sing one note, except it were by rote,  
 Still buzzing like a bee ;  
 To ease my heavy heart of some though little smart,  
 For want of other glee.

And as for pleasant wine, there was no drink so fine,  
     For to be tasted here ;  
 Full simple was my fare, if that I should compare,  
     The same to Christmas cheer.

I saw no kind of sight that might my mind delight,  
     Believe me, noble dame ;  
 But everything I saw did fret at woe my maw,  
     To think upon the same.

Upon some bushy balk full fain I was to walk,  
     In woods, from tree to tree,  
 For want of better room ; but since my fatal doom  
     Hath so appointed me ;

I stood therewith content, the Christmas full was spent,  
     In hope that God will send  
 A better yet next year, my heavy heart to cheer ;  
     And so I make an end.

*Make we mirth for Christës birth,  
 And sing we Yule till Candlemas*

Fifteenth Century.

THE first day of Yule have we in mind,  
 How God was man born of our kind,  
 For He the bonds would unbind  
     Of all our sins and wickedness.

The second day we sing of Stephen  
 That stonëd [was] and stied <sup>1</sup> up even  
 To God that he saw stand in heaven,  
     And crownëd was for his prowess.

<sup>1</sup> Ascended.

The third day 'longeth to St. John,  
 That was Christ's darling, dearer none,  
 To whom He betook,<sup>1</sup> when He should gone,  
 His mother dear for his cleanness.

The fourth day, of the children young,  
 That Herod to death had done with wrong ;  
 Of Christ they could not tell with tongue,  
 But with their blood bare Him witness.

The fifth day 'longeth to St. Thomas,<sup>2</sup>  
 That as a strong pillar of brass  
 Held up the Church and slain he was,  
 For he stood [fast] in righteousness.

The eighth day took Jesu His name,  
 That saved mankind fro sin and shame,  
 And circumcised was for no blame,  
 But for ensample of meekness.

The twelfth day offered to Him kings three,  
 Gold, myrrh, incense, these giftës free,  
 For God and man and king is He ;  
 Thus worshipped they His worthiness.

The fourteenth day came Mary mild,  
 Into the Temple with her Child,  
 To show her clean that was never defiled,  
 And therewith endeth Christmas.

<sup>1</sup> Entrusted.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas à Becket.

*Christmas*

1558.

Thomas Tusser.

GET ivy and hull,<sup>1</sup> woman, deck up thine house,  
 And take this same brawn for to seethe and to souse ;  
 Provide us good cheer, for thou knowest the old guise,  
 Old customs that good be, let no man despise.  
 At Christmas be merry and thank God of all,  
 And feast thy poor neighbours, the great and the small.  
 Yea, all the year long have an eye to the poor,  
 And God shall send luck to keep open thy door.  
 Good fruit and good plenty do well in thy loft,  
 Then lay for an orchard and cherish it oft.  
 The profit is mickle, the pleasure is much ;  
 At pleasure with profit few wise men will grutch.  
 For plants and for stocks lay aforehand to cast,  
 But set or remove them, while Twelve-tide<sup>2</sup> do last.

*Now have good day, now have good day !  
 I am Christmas, and now I go my way*

Before 1536.

HERE have I dwelled with more and less  
 From Hallowtide till Candlemas,  
 And now must I from you hence pass ;  
*Now have good day !*

I take my leave of king and knight,  
 And earl, baron and lady bright,  
 To wilderness I must me dight ;  
*Now have good day !*

<sup>1</sup> Holly.<sup>2</sup> Christmas to Twelfth Night.

And at the good lord of this hall  
 I take my leave, and of guestes all.  
 Methinks I hear, Lent doth call ;  
*Now have good day !*

And at every worthy officer,  
 Marshall, panter and butler,  
 I take my leave as for this year ;  
*Now have good day !*

Another year I trust I shall  
 Make merry in this hall,  
 If rest and peace in England may fall ;  
*Now have good day !*

But oftentimes I have heard say  
 That he is loth to part away,  
 That often biddeth " have good day " ;  
*Now have good day !*

Now fare ye well, all in fere !  
 Now fare ye well for all this year !  
 Yet for my sake, have good cheer ;  
*Now have good day !*

### *A Christmas Carol*<sup>1</sup>

1622.

George Wither.

So, now is come our joyfullest feast ;  
 Let every man be jolly.  
 Each room with ivy leaves is dressed,  
 And every post with holly.

<sup>1</sup> *Juvenilia.*

Though some churls at our mirth repine,  
Round your foreheads garlands twine ;  
Drown sorrow in a cup of wine,  
And let us all be merry.

Now all our neighbours' chimneys smoke,  
And Christmas blocks are burning ;  
Their ovens they with baked meats choke,  
And all their spits are turning.  
Without the door let sorrow lie ;  
And if for cold it hap to die,  
We'll bury't in a Christmas pie,  
And evermore be merry.

Now every lad is wondrous trim,  
And no man minds his labour ;  
Our lasses have provided them  
A bag-pipe and a tabor ;  
Young men and maids, and girls and boys,  
Give life to one another's joys ;  
And you anon shall by their noise  
Perceive that they are merry.

Rank misers now do sparing shun ;  
Their hall of music soundeth ;  
And dogs thence with whole shoulders run,  
So all things there aboundeth.  
The country folks themselves advance  
With crowdy muttons out of France ;  
And Jack shall pipe and Jill shall dance,  
And all the town be merry.



Ned Squash hath fetched his bands from pawn,  
And all his best apparel;  
Brisk Nell hath bought a ruff of lawn  
With dropping of the barrel;  
And those that hardly all the year  
Had bread to eat, or rags to wear,  
Will have both clothes and dainty fare,  
And all the day be merry.

Now poor men to the justices  
With capons make their errands;  
And if they hap to fail of these,  
They plague them with their warrants;  
But now they feed them with good cheer,  
And what they want they take in beer;  
For Christmas comes but once a year,  
And then they shall be merry.

Good farmers in the country nurse  
The poor, that else were undone;  
Some landlords spend their money worse  
On lust and pride at London.  
There the roysters they do play,  
Drab and dice their lands away,  
Which may be ours another day;  
And therefore let's be merry.

The client now his suit forbears,  
The prisoner's heart is eased;  
The debtor drinks away his cares,  
And for the time is pleased.

Though other purses be more fat,  
Why should we pine or grieve at that ?  
Hang sorrow ! care will kill a cat,  
And therefore let's be merry.

Hark ! how the wags abroad do call  
Each other forth to rambling ;  
Anon you'll see them in the hall  
For nuts and apples scrambling.  
Hark ! how the roofs with laughter sound !  
Anon they'll think the house goes round,  
For they the cellar's depth have found,  
And there they will be merry.

The wenches with their wassel-bowls  
About the streets are singing ;  
The boys are come to catch the owls,  
The wild mare is in bringing.  
Our kitchen boy hath broke his box,  
And to the dealing of the ox  
Our honest neighbours come by flocks,  
And here they will be merry.

Now kings and queens poor sheep cots have,  
And mate with everybody ;  
The honest now may have the knave,  
And wise men play the noddy.  
Some youths will now a-mumming go,  
Some others play at Rowland-ho,  
And twenty other gameboys mo,  
Because they will be merry.

Then wherefore in these merry days  
 Should we, I pray, be duller?  
 No, let us sing some roundelays,  
 To make our mirth the fuller.  
 And whilst thus inspired we sing,  
 Let all the streets with echoes ring,  
 Woods and hills and everything,  
 Bear witness we are merry.

### *A Christmas Carol*

1648.

Robert Herrick.

*Chorus.* WHAT sweeter music can we bring,  
 Than a carol, for to sing  
 The birth of this our heavenly King?  
 Awake the voice! Awake the string!  
 Hark, ear, and eye, and everything,  
 Awake! the while the active finger  
 Runs divisions with the singer.

*(From the flourish they come to the song.)*

Dark and dull night, fly hence away,  
 And give the honour to this day,  
 That sees December turn'd to May.  
 If we may ask the reason, say  
 The why and wherefore all things here  
 Seem like the springtime of the year?  
 Why does the chilling winter's morn  
 Smile like a field beset with corn?  
 Or smell like to a mead new-shorn,

Thus on the sudden ? Come and see  
 The cause why things thus fragrant be :  
 'Tis He is born whose quickening birth  
 Gives life and lustre public mirth  
 To heaven and the under-earth.

*Chorus.* We see Him come, and know Him ours,  
 Who with His sunshine and His showers  
 Turns all the patient ground to flowers.

The Darling of the world is come,  
 And fit it is we find a room  
 To welcome Him. The nobler part  
 Of all the house here, is the heart.

*Chorus.* Which we will give him ; and bequeath  
 This holly and this ivy wreath,  
 To do him honour who's our King,  
 The Lord of all this revelling.

*The New Year is Begun*<sup>1</sup>

Seventeenth Century.

THE New Year is begun,  
 Good morrow, my masters all !  
 The cheerful rising sun  
 Now shining in this hall,  
 Brings mirth and joy  
 To man and boy  
 With all that here do dwell ;  
 Whom Jesus bless  
 With love's increase,  
 So all things shall prosper well.

<sup>1</sup> *New Christmas Carols.* (Oxford. Undated.)

A New Year's gift I bring  
 Unto my master here,  
 Which is a welcome thing  
 Of mirth and merry cheer.  
 A New Year's lamb  
 Come from thy dam  
 An hour before daybreak ;  
 Your noted ewe  
 Doth this bestow,  
 Good master, for your sake.

And to my dame so kind  
 This New Year's gift I bring ;  
 I'll bear an honest mind  
 Unto her whilst I live.  
 Your white-wooled sheep  
 I'll safely keep  
 From harm of bush or briar,  
 That garments gay  
 For your array  
 May clothe you the next New Year.

And to your children all,  
 These New Year's gifts I bring ;  
 And though the price be small,  
 They're fit for queen or king :  
 Fair pippins red  
 Kept in my bed  
 A-mellowing since last year,  
 Whose beauty bright  
 So clear of sight  
 Their hearts will glad and cheer.

And to your maids and men  
 I bring both points and pins ;  
 Come bid me welcome then,  
 The good New Year begins ;  
 And for my love  
 Let me approve  
 The friendship of your maid,  
 Whose nappy ale  
 So good and stale  
 Will make my wits afraid.

I dare not with it deal  
 But in a sober diet.  
 If I, poor shepherd, steal  
 A draught to be unquiet,  
 And lose my way  
 This New Year's day  
 As I go to my fold,  
 You'll surely think  
 My love of drink  
 This following year will hold.

Here stands my bottle and hook,  
 Good kitchen-maid, draw near ;  
 Thou art an honest cook,  
 And canst brew ale and beer ;  
 Thy office show  
 Before I go,  
 My bottle and bag come fill ;  
 And for thy sake  
 I'll merry make  
 Upon the next green hill.

*All You that are Good Fellows*<sup>1</sup>

1642.

ALL you that are good fellows,  
Come hearken to my song ;  
I know you do not hate good cheer  
Nor liquor that is strong.  
I hope there is none here  
But soon will take my part,  
Seeing my master and my dame  
Says welcome with their heart.

This is a time of joyfulness  
And merry time of year,  
Whereas the rich with plenty stored  
Doth make the poor good cheer ;  
Plum-porridge, roast-beef, and minced pies  
Stand smoking on the board,  
With other brave varieties  
Our master doth afford.

Our mistress and her cleanly maids  
Have neatly played the cooks ;  
Methinks these dishes eagerly  
At my sharp stomach looks,  
As though they were afraid  
To see me draw my blade ;  
But I revenged on them will be  
Until my stomach's stayed.

<sup>1</sup> *New Christmas Carols.*

Come fill us of the strongest,  
 Small drink is out of date ;  
 Methinks I shall fare like a prince  
 And sit in gallant state.  
 This is no miser's feast,  
 Although that things be dear ;  
 God grant the founder of this feast  
 Each Christmas keep good cheer.

This day for Christ we celebrate  
 Who was born at this time ;  
 For which all Christians should rejoice  
 And I do sing in rhyme.  
 When you have given God thanks,  
 Unto your dainties fall.  
 Heaven bless my master and my dame,  
 Lord bless me and you all !

*Come, Mad Boys*<sup>1</sup>

1642.

COME, mad boys, be glad, boys, for Christmas is here,  
 And we shall be feasted with jolly good cheer ;  
 Then let us be merry, 'tis Saint Stephen's day,  
 Let's eat and drink freely, here's nothing to pay.

My master bids you welcome, and so doth my dame,  
 And 'tis yonder smoking dish doth me inflame ;  
 Anon I'll be with you, though you me outface,  
 For now I do tell you I have time and place.

<sup>1</sup> *New Christmas Carols.*



I'll troll the bowl to you, then let it go round,  
 My heels are so light they can stand on no ground ;  
 My tongue it doth chatter, and goes pitter patter,  
 Here's good beer and strong beer, for I will not flatter.

And now for remembrance of blessed Saint Stephen,  
 Let's joy at morning, at noon, and at even ;  
 Then leave off your mincing, and fall to mince pies,  
 I pray take my counsel, be ruled by the wise.

*With Merry Glee and Solace*<sup>1</sup>

1661.

WITH merry glee and solace  
 This second day of Christmas  
 Now comes in bravely to my master's house,  
 Where plenty of good cheer I see,  
 With that which most contenteth me,  
 As brawn and bacon, powdered beef and sauce.

For the love of Stephen,  
 That blessed saint of heaven,  
 Which stonēd was for Jesus Christ his sake,  
 Let us all both more and less  
 Cast away all heaviness,  
 And in a sober manner merry make.

He was a man beloved,  
 And his faith approved  
 By suffering death [up]on this holy day,  
 Where he with gentle patience,  
 And a constant sufferance,  
 Hath taught us all to heaven the ready way.

<sup>1</sup> *New Carolls for the Mery Time of Christmas.*

So let our mirth be civil,  
That not one thought of evil  
    May take possession of our hearts at all,  
    So shall we love and favour get  
    Of them that kindly thus do set  
    Their bounties here so freely in this hall.

Of delicates so dainty,  
I see here is plenty  
    Upon this table ready here prepared ;  
    Then let us now give thanks to those  
    That all things friendly thus bestows,  
    Esteeming not this world that is so hard.

For of the same my master  
Hath made me here a taster ;  
    The Lord above requite him for the same !  
    And so to all within this house  
    I will drink a full carouse,  
    With leave of my good master and my dame.

And, the Lord be praised,  
My stomach is well eased,  
    My bones at quiet may go take their rest ;  
    Good fortune surely followed me  
    To bring me thus so luckily  
    To eat and drink so freely of the best.

*All You that in this House be Here*<sup>1</sup>

1661.

ALL you that in this house be here,  
 Remember Christ that for us died,  
 And spend away with modest cheer,  
 In loving sort, this Christmastide.

And whereas plenty God hath sent,  
 Give frankly to your friends in love ;  
 The bounteous mind is freely bent,  
 And never will a niggard prove.

Our table spread within the hall,  
 I know a banquet is at hand,  
 And friendly sort to welcome all  
 That will unto their tacklings stand.

The maids are bonny girls I see,  
 Who have provided much good cheer,  
 Which at my dame's commandment be  
 To set it on the table here.

For I have here two knives in store  
 To lend to him that wanteth one ;  
 Commend my wits, good lads, therefore,  
 That comes now here having none.

For if I should, no Christmas pie  
 Would fall, I doubt, unto my share ;  
 Wherefore I will my manhood try,  
 To fight a battle if I dare.

<sup>1</sup> *New Carolls for the Mery Time of Christmas.*

For pastry crust, like castle walls,  
 Stands braving me unto my face ;  
 I am not well until it falls  
 And I made captain of the place.

The prunes so lovely look on me,  
 I cannot choose but venture on ;  
 The pie-meat spicēd brave I see,  
 The which I must not let alone.

Then, butler, fill me forth some beer,  
 My song hath made me somewhat dry ;  
 And so again to this good cheer,  
 I'll quickly fall courageously.

And for my master I will pray,  
 With all that of his household are,  
 Both old and young, that long we may  
 Of God's good blessing have a share.

*Come Follow, Follow Me*<sup>1</sup>

1688.

COME follow, follow me,  
 Those that good fellows be,  
 Into the buttery  
 Our manhood for to try ;  
 The master keeps a bounteous house,  
 And gives leave freely to carouse.

<sup>1</sup> *New Christmas Carols.*

Then wherefore should we fear,  
Seeing here is store of cheer ?  
    It shows but cowardice  
    At this time to be nice.  
Then boldly draw your blades and fight,  
For we shall have a merry night.

When we have done this fray,  
Then we will go to play  
    At cards or else at dice,  
    And be rich in a trice ;  
Then let the knaves go round apace,  
I hope each time to have an ace.

Come, maids, let's waste no beer  
After our Christmas cheer,  
    And I will duly crave  
    Good husbands you may have,  
And that you may good houses keep,  
Where we may drink carouses deep.

And when that[']s] spent the day,  
We'll Christmas gambols play,  
    At hot cockles beside,  
    And then go to all-hide,  
With many other pretty toys,  
Men, women, youths, maids, girls and boys.

Come, let's dance round the hall,  
And let's for liquor call ;  
    Put apples in the fire,  
    Sweet maids, I you desire ;  
And let a bowl be spiced well,  
Of happy stuff that doth excel.

Twelve days we now have spent  
 In mirth and merriment,  
     And daintily did fare,  
     For which we took no care ;  
 But now I sadly call to mind  
 What days of sorrow are behind.

We must leave off to play,  
 To-morrow's working day ;  
     According to each calling  
     Each man must now be falling,  
 And ply his business all the year,  
 Next Christmas for to make good cheer.

Now of my master kind,  
 Good welcome I did find,  
     And of my loving mistress,  
     This merry time of Christmas ;  
 For which to them great thanks I give,  
 God grant they long together live.

*Now Thrice Welcome, Christmas*<sup>1</sup>

1695.

Now thrice welcome, Christmas,  
 Which brings us good cheer,  
 Minc'd pies and plum porridge,  
     Good ale and strong beer ;  
 With pig, goose and capon,  
     The best that can be,  
 So well doth the weather  
 And our stomachs agree.

<sup>1</sup> *Poor Robin's Almanac.*

Observe how the chimneys  
Do smoke all about,  
The cooks are providing  
For dinner, no doubt ;  
But those on whose tables  
No victuals appear,  
O may they keep Lent  
All the rest of the year !

With holly and ivy  
So green and so gay,  
We deck up our houses  
As fresh as the day,  
With bays and rosemary,  
And laurel complete ;  
And every one now  
Is a king in conceit.

## WASSAIL<sup>1</sup>

### *Wassail*

About 1548.

John Bale.<sup>2</sup>

WASSAIL, wassail, out of the milk pail,  
Wassail, wassail, as white as my nail,  
Wassail, wassail, in snow, frost and hail,  
Wassail, wassail, with partridge and rail,  
Wassail, wassail, that much doth avail,  
Wassail, wassail, that never will fail.

*Wassail, wassail, wassail, sing we,  
In worship of Christ's Nativity*

Before 1536.

Now joy be to the Trinity,  
Father, Son and Holy Ghost,  
That One God is in Trinity,  
Father of heaven, of mightës most.  
*Wassail, wassail, wassail, sing we,  
In worship of Christ's nativity!*

And joy be to the virgin pure,  
That ever kept her undefiled,  
Grounded in grace, in heart full sure,  
And bare a child as maiden mild.  
*Wassail, wassail, wassail, sing we,  
In worship of Christ's nativity!*

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> *King John*.



Bethlehem and the star so sheen,  
 That shone three kinges for to guide,  
 Bear witness of this maiden clean ;  
 The kinges three offered that tide.  
*Wassail, wassail, wassail, sing we,  
 In worship of Christ's nativity !*

And shepherds heard, as written is,  
 The joyful song that there was sung,  
 " *Gloria in excelsis !* "  
 With angel's voice it was out-rung.  
*Wassail, wassail, wassail, sing we,  
 In worship of Christ's nativity !*

Now joy be to the blessedful Child  
 And joy be to His mother dear ;  
 Joy we all of that maiden mild,  
 And joy have they that make good cheer !  
*Wassail, wassail, wassail, sing we,  
 In worship of Christ's nativity !*

### *Omnes Gentes Plaudite*

Fifteenth Century.

*Omnes gentes plaudite,*  
 I saw many birds sitting on a tree ;  
 They took their flight and flew away,  
 With, *Ego dixi*, have good day !  
 Many white feathers hath the pie—  
 I may no more sing, my lips are so dry.  
 Many white feathers hath the swan—  
 The more that I drink, the less good I can.  
 Lay sticks on the fire, well may it burn ;<sup>1</sup>  
 Give us once to drink ere away we turn.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Text*: wyl mot is brenne.

<sup>2</sup> *Text*: ere we gon henne.

*Bring us in Good Ale*<sup>1</sup>*Temp.* Henry VI.

*Bring us in good ale, and bring us in good ale ;  
For our Blessed Lady's sake, bring us in good ale.*

BRING us in no brown bread, for that is made of bran,  
Nor bring us in no white bread, for therein is no game ;  
*But bring us in good ale.*

Bring us in no beef, for there is many bones,  
But bring us in good ale, for that goes down at once ;  
*And bring us in good ale.*

Bring us in no bacon, for that is passing fat,  
But bring us in good ale, and give us enough of that ;  
*And bring us in good ale.*

Bring us in no mutton, for that is often lean,  
Nor bring us in no tripes, for they be seldom clean ;  
*But bring us in good ale.*

Bring us in no eggs, for there are many shells,  
But bring us in good ale, and give us nothing else ;  
*And bring us in good ale.*

Bring us in no butter, for therein are many hairs ;  
Nor bring us in no pig's flesh, for that will make us boars ;  
*But bring us in good ale.*

Bring us in no puddings, for therein is all God's good ;  
Nor bring us in no venison, for that is not for our blood ;  
*But bring us in good ale.*

Bring us in no capon's flesh, for that is often dear ;  
Nor bring us in no duck's flesh, for they slobber in the mere ;  
*But bring us in good ale.*

<sup>1</sup> See note.

*A Bone, God Wot**Temp.* Henry VIII.

A BONE, God wot,  
 Sticks in my throat ;  
 Without I have a draught  
     Of corny ale,  
     Nappy and stale,  
 My life is in great waste.

Some ale or beer,  
 Gentle butler,  
 Some liquor thou us shew,  
     Such as you mash,  
     Our throats to wash,  
 The best ware that you brew.

Saint, master and knight,  
 That Saint Malt hight,  
 Were pressed between two stones,—  
     That sweet humour  
     Of his liquor  
 Would make us sing at once.

Mr. Wortley,  
 I dare well say,  
 I tell you as I think,  
     Would not, I say,  
     Bid us this day,  
 But that we should have drink.

His men so tall  
 Walks up his hall,  
 With many a comely dish ;  
     Of his good meat  
     I cannot eat,  
 Without a drink ywis.

Now give us drink.  
 And let cat wink,  
 I tell you all at once,  
     It sticks so sore,  
     I may sing no more,  
 Till I have drunken once.

*Come Bravelly on, my Masters*<sup>1</sup>

1642.

COME bravely on, my masters,  
 For here we shall be tasters  
 Of curious dishes that are brave and fine ;  
 Where they that do such cheer afford,  
 I'll lay my knife upon the board,  
 My master and my dame they do not pine.

Who is't will not be merry  
 And sing down, down-a-derry ?  
 For now it is a time of joy and mirth ;  
 'Tis said 'tis merry in the hall  
 Whenas beards they do wag all ;  
 God's plenty's here, it doth not show a dearth.

<sup>1</sup> *New Christmas Carols.*

Let him take all lives longest,  
 Come fill us of the strongest,  
 And I will drink a health to honest John ;  
     Come pray thee, butler, fill the bowl,  
     And let it round the table troll,  
 When that is up I'll tell you more anon.

*My Master and Dame, I well Perceive*<sup>1</sup>

Seventeenth Century.

My master and dame, I well perceive,  
 Are purposed to be merry to-night,  
 And willingly hath given me leave  
     To combat with a Christmas knight.  
 Sir Pig, I see, comes prancing in  
     And bids me draw if that I dare ;  
 I care not for his valour a pin,  
     For Jack of him will have a share.

My Lady Goose among the rest  
     Upon the table takes her place,  
 And piping-hot bids do my best,  
     And bravely looks me in the face ;  
 For pigs and geese are gallant cheer,  
     God bless my master and dame therefore !  
 I trust before the next New Year  
     To eat my part of half a score.

I likewise see good minced-pie  
     Here standing swaggering on the table ;  
 The lofty walls so large and high  
     I'll level down if I be able ;

<sup>1</sup> *New Christmas Carols.* (Oxford. Undated.)

For they be furnished with good plums,  
 And spic'd well with pepper and salt,  
 Every prune as big as both my thumbs  
 To drive down bravely the juice of malt.

Fill me some of your Christmas beer,  
 Your pepper sets my mouth on heat,  
 And Jack's a-dry with your good cheer,  
 Give me some good ale to my meat.  
 And then again my stomach I'll show,  
 For good roast-beef here stoutly stands ;  
 I'll make it stoop before I go,  
 Or I'll be no man of my hands.

And for the plenty of this house  
 God keep it thus well-stored alway ;  
 Come, butler, fill me a good carouse,  
 And so we'll end our Christmas day.

*A Jolly Wassail-Bowl*<sup>1</sup>

Seventeenth Century.

A JOLLY wassail-bowl,  
 A wassail of good ale,  
 Well fare the butler's soul,  
 That setteth this to sale,  
 Our jolly wassail.

Good dame, here at your door,  
 Our wassail we begin ;  
 We are all maidens poor,  
 We pray now let us in  
 With our wassail.

<sup>1</sup> *New Christmas Carols.* (Oxford. Undated.)

Our wassail we do fill  
 With apples and with spice,  
 Then grant us your good will  
 To taste here once or twice  
 Of our wassail.

If any maidens be  
 Here dwelling in this house,  
 They kindly will agree  
 To take a full carouse  
 Of our wassail.

But here they let us stand  
 All freezing in the cold ;  
 Good master, your command  
 To enter and be bold  
 With our wassail.

Much joy unto this hall  
 With us is entered in ;  
 Our master, first of all,  
 We hope will now begin  
 Of our wassail.

And after his good wife  
 Our spic'd bowl will try ;  
 The Lord prolong your life !  
 Good fortune we espy  
 For our wassail.

Some bounty from your hands,  
 Our wassail to maintain,  
 We'll buy no home nor lands  
 With that which we do gain  
 With our wassail.

This is our merry night  
Of choosing king and queen ;  
Then, be it your delight,  
That something may be seen  
In our wassail.

It is a noble part  
To bear a liberal mind.  
God bless our master's heart !  
For here we comfort find  
With our wassail.

And now we must be gone,  
To seek out more good cheer ;  
Where bounty will be shown  
As we have found it here  
With our wassail.

Much joy betide them all,  
Our prayers shall be still ;  
We hope and ever shall  
For this your great good will  
To our wassail.

*Wassail, Wassail, all over the Town*

Traditional.

WASSAIL, wassail, all over the town,  
Our bread it is white, and our ale it is brown ;  
Our bowl it is made of the maplin tree,  
So here, my good fellow, I'll drink it to thee.



The wassailing bowl, with a toast within,  
 Come, fill it up unto the brim ;  
 Come, fill it up, that we may see ;  
 With the wassailing bowl I'll drink to thee.

Come, butler, come bring us a bowl of your best ;  
 And we hope your souls in heaven shall rest ;  
 But if you do bring us a bowl of your small,  
 Then down shall go butler, the bowl and all.

O butler, O butler, now don't you be worst,  
 But pull out your knife and cut us a toast ;  
 And cut us a toast, one that we may all see ;  
 With the wassailing bowl I'll drink to thee.

Here's to Dobbin and to his right eye !  
 God send our mistress a good Christmas pie !  
 A good Christmas pie as e'er we did see ;  
 With the wassailing bowl I'll drink to thee.

Here's to Broad May and to her<sup>1</sup> broad horn,  
 God send our master a good crop of corn,  
 A good crop of corn as we all may see ;  
 With the wassailing bowl I'll drink to thee.

Here's to Colly and to her long tail,  
 We hope our master and mistress heart will ne'er fail ;  
 But bring us a bowl of your good strong beer,  
 And then we shall taste of your Happy New Year.

<sup>1</sup> *Text*: his.

Be there here any pretty maids ? We hope there be some.  
 Don't let the jolly wassailers stand on the cold stone,  
 But open the door and pull out the pin,  
 That we jolly wassailers may all sail in.

*The Wassailers' Carol*

Traditional.

HERE we come a-wassailing  
 Among the leaves so green,  
 Here we come a-wandering  
 So fair to be seen.

*Chorus.* Love and joy come to you,  
 And to your wassail too,  
 And God send you a Happy New Year,  
 a New Year ;  
 And God send you a Happy New Year.  
 Our wassail cup is made of the rosemary tree,  
 So is your beer of the best barley.

We are not the daily beggars,  
 That beg from door to door,  
 But we are neighbours' children,  
 Whom you have seen before.

Call up the butler of this house,  
 Put on his golden ring,  
 Bid him bring up a glass of beer,  
 The better that we may sing.

We have got a little purse  
 Made of stretching leather skin ;  
 We want a little of your money  
 To line it well within.

Bring us out a table,  
 And spread it with a cloth,  
 Bring us out a mouldy cheese,  
 And some of your Christmas loaf.

God bless the master of this house,  
 Likewise the mistress too ;  
 And all the little children,  
 That round the table go.

Good master and mistress,  
 While you're sitting by the fire,  
 Pray think of us poor children,  
 Who are wandering in the mire.

*Here we Come A-Whistling*

Traditional.

HERE we come a-whistling<sup>1</sup> through the fields so green ;  
 Here we come a-singing, so fair to be seen.

*God send you happy, God send you happy,  
 Pray God send you a Happy New Year !*

The roads are very dirty, my boots are very thin,  
 I have a little pocket to put a penny in.

*God send you happy, God send you happy,  
 Pray God send you a Happy New Year !*

Bring out your little table and spread it with a cloth,  
 Bring out some of your old ale, likewise your Christmas loaf.

*God send you happy, God send you happy,  
 Pray God send you a Happy New Year !*

<sup>1</sup> *For* wassailing. Cf. preceding carol.

God bless the master of this house, likewise the mistress too ;  
 And all the little children that round the table strew.

*God send you happy, God send you happy,  
 Pray God send you a happy New Year !*

*As I Sat under a Sycamore Tree*

Traditional.

As I sat under a sycamore tree, a sycamore tree, a sycamore  
 tree,

I looked me out upon the sea,  
*A Christmas day in the morning.*

I saw three ships a-sailing there, a-sailing there, a-sailing  
 there,

The Virgin Mary and Christ they bare,<sup>1</sup>  
*A Christmas day in the morning.*

He did whistle, and she did sing, she did sing, she did sing,  
 And all the bells on earth did ring,

*A Christmas day in the morning.*

And now we hope to taste your cheer, taste your cheer,  
 taste your cheer,

And wish you all a Happy New Year,  
*A Christmas day in the morning.*

<sup>1</sup> See note.

## CAPUT APRI DEFERO<sup>1</sup>

### *Tidings I Bring You for to Tell*

Fifteenth Century.

TIDINGS I bring you for to tell,  
What me in wild forest befell,  
When me must with a wild beast mell,<sup>2</sup>  
With the boar so brim.<sup>3</sup>

A boar so brim that me pursued,  
Me for to kill so sharply slued,<sup>4</sup>  
That brimly<sup>3</sup> beast so cruel and rude,<sup>5</sup>  
There tamed I him,  
And reft fro him both life and limb.

Truly to show you that is true,  
His head with my sword I hew,  
To make this day mirth new to you,  
Now eat thereof anon.

Eat and much good do it you,  
Take your bread and mustard thereto,  
Joy with me that I have thus done,  
I pray you to be glad every one,  
And joy all in one.

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> Meddle.

<sup>3</sup> Fierce.

<sup>4</sup> *Text*: amevd.

<sup>5</sup> *Text*: unryde.

*Po, po, po, po,*  
 [1] *love brawn and so do mo*

Fifteenth Century.

At the beginning of the meat,  
 Of a boar's head ye shall eat,  
 And in the mustard ye shall wet ;  
 And ye shall singen ere ye gone.<sup>1</sup>

Welcome be ye that be here,  
 And ye shall have right good cheer,  
 And also a right good fare ;  
 And ye shall singen ere ye gone.

Welcome be ye every one,  
 For ye shall singen sithe<sup>2</sup> anon ;  
 Hie you fast that ye had done,  
 And ye shall singen ere ye gone.

*Hey, hey, hey, hey,*  
*The boar's head is arm'd Gay*

Fifteenth Century.

THE boar's head in hand I bring,  
 With garland gay in portering.  
 I pray you all with me to sing,  
*With hey.*

Lords, knights, and squires,  
 Parsons, priests, and vicars,  
 The boar's head is the first mess,  
*With hey.*

<sup>1</sup> Go.

<sup>2</sup> After.

The boar's head, as I you say,  
 He takes his leave, and goeth his way,  
 Gone after the Twelfth till fit day,

*With hey.*

Then comes in the second course<sup>1</sup> with mickle pride,  
 The cranes, the herons, the bitterns by their side,  
 The partridges and the plovers, the woodcocks and the  
 snipe,

*With hey.*

Larks in hot sauce, ladies for to pick,  
 Good drink thereto, luscious and fine,  
 Blwet of Allmayne,<sup>2</sup> Romney and wine,

*With hey.*

Good bread, ale and wine, dare I well say,  
 The boar's head with mustard armēd so gay ;  
 Frumenty to pottage, with venison fine,  
 And the humbles of the doe, and all that ever comes in ;  
 Capons ybaked with the pieces of the roe,  
 Raisins and currants,<sup>3</sup> with other spices mo.

### *In Die Nativitatis*

*Temp.* Henry VII. or VIII.

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,  
 Tidings good I think to tell.*

THE boar's head that we bring here,  
 Betokeneth a Prince withouten peer,  
 Is born this day to buy us dear,

*Nowell.*

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> For bruet of Allmayne, *i.e.* German stew.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, raisins of currants, the common expression of the time meaning originally, raisins of Corinth.

A boar is a sovereign beast,  
 And acceptable in every feast ;  
 So might thy Lord be to most and least,  
*Nowell.*

The boar's head we bring with song,  
 In worship of Him that thus sprung  
 Of a virgin to redress all wrong,  
*Nowell.*

*The Boar's Head in Hand bear I*<sup>1</sup>

Traditional.

THE boar's head in hand bear I,  
 Bedeck'd with bay and rosemary ;  
 And I pray you, my masters, be merry,  
*Quot estis in convivio.*  
*Caput apri defero,*  
*Reddens laudes Domino.*

The boar's head, as I understand,  
 Is the rarest dish in all this land,  
 Which thus bedeck'd with a gay garland,  
 Let us *servire cantico.*  
*Caput apri defero,*  
*Reddens laudes Domino.*

Our steward hath provided this,  
 In honour of the King of bliss ;  
 Which on this day to be serv'd is,  
*In reginensi atrio.*  
*Caput apri defero,*  
*Reddens laudes Domino.*

<sup>1</sup> As sung at Queen's College, Oxford.



*A Carol Bringing in the Boar's Head*<sup>1</sup>

1521.

*Caput apri deferō  
Reddens laudes Domino.*

THE boar's head in hand bring I,  
With garlands gay and rosemary,  
I pray you all sing merrily,  
*Qui estis in conuiuio.*

The boar's head, I understand,  
Is the chief service in this land.  
Look wherever it be found,  
*Seruite cum cantico.*

Be glad, lords, both more and less,  
For this hath ordained our steward,  
To cheer you all this Christmas,  
The boar's head with mustard.

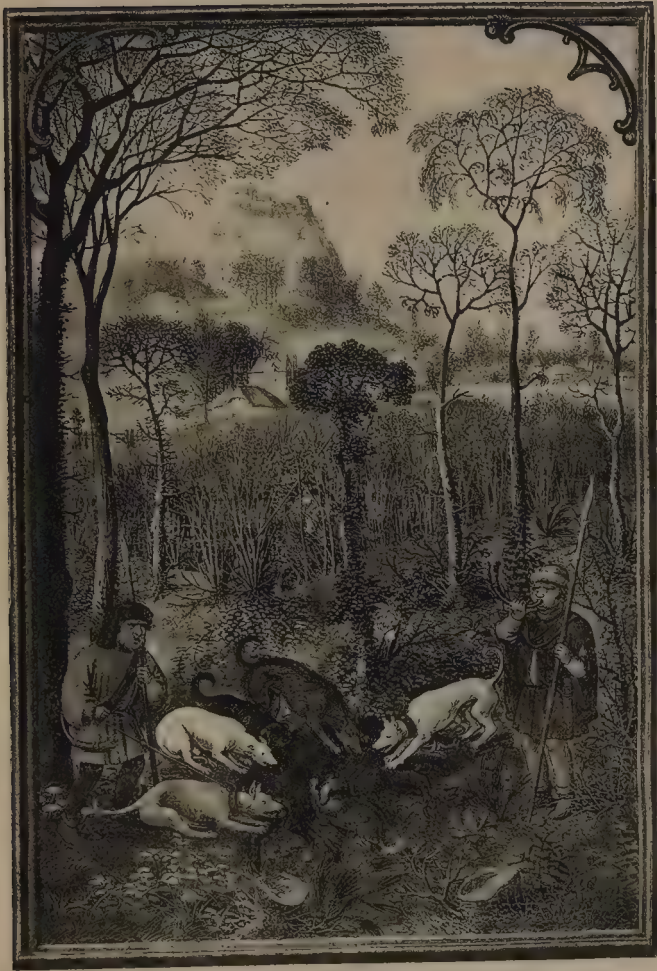
*The Boar is Dead*<sup>2</sup>

1607.

THE boar is dead,  
Lo, here is his head;  
What man could have done more  
Than his head off to strike  
Meleager-like,  
And bring it as I do before.}

<sup>1</sup> Wynkyn de Worde, *Christmas Carolles*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Christmas Prince*, as given at St. John's College, Oxford.



*The Boar is Dead*



He living spoiled  
Where good men toiled,  
Which made kind Ceres sorry ;  
But now dead and drawn,  
Is very good brawn,  
And we have brought it for ye.

Then set down the swineyard,  
The foe to the vineyard,  
Let Bacchus crown his fall ;  
Let this boar's head and mustard,  
Stand for pig, goose, and custard,  
And so you are welcome all.

## VENI CORONABERIS<sup>1</sup>

### *Holly and Ivy Made a Great Party*

Fifteenth Century.

HOLLY and Ivy made a great party,<sup>2</sup>  
Who should have the mastery,  
In landës where they go.

Then spoke Holly, "I am free and jolly,  
I will have the mastery,  
In landës where we go."

Then spake Ivy, "I am lov'd and prov'd,  
And I will have the mastery,  
In landës where we go."

Then spake Holly, and set him down on his knee,  
"I pray thee, gentle Ivy,  
Say me no villainy,  
In landës where we go."

### *Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, now sing we*

Fifteenth Century.

HERE comes holly that is so gent,  
To please all men is his intent,  
*Alleluia.*

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> Here, division into parties, *i.e.* contention.

But, lord and lady of this hall,  
Whosoever against holly call,  
*Alleluia,*

Whosoever against holly do cry,  
In a leap<sup>1</sup> shall he hang full high,  
*Alleluia.*

Whosoever against holly do sing,  
He may weep and his handës wring,  
*Alleluia.*

*Ivy chief of trees it is,  
Veni coronaberis*

Fifteenth Century.

THE most worthy she is in town,  
He that saith other, doth amiss ;  
And worthy to bear the crown ;  
*Veni coronaberis.*

Ivy is soft and meek of speech,  
Against all bale she is bliss ;  
Well is he that may her reach ;  
*Veni coronaberis.*

Ivy is green, with colour bright,  
Of all trees best she is ;  
And that I prove well now by right ;  
*Veni coronaberis.*

<sup>1</sup> Basket.

Ivy beareth berries black ;  
 God grant us all His bliss !  
 For there shall me nothing lack,  
*Veni coronaberis.*

*A Song on the Ivy and the Holly*

*Temp.* Henry VI.

*Nay, ivy, nay, it shall not be, ywis,  
 Let holly have the mastery as the manner is.*

HOLLY stands in the hall, fair to behold,  
 Ivy stands without the door, she is full sore a-cold.  
*Nay, ivy, nay, it shall not be, ywis,  
 Let holly have the mastery as the manner is.*

Holly and his merry men they dancen and they sing,<sup>1</sup>  
 Ivy and her maidens they weepen and they wring.  
*Nay, ivy, nay, it shall not be, ywis,  
 Let holly have the mastery as the manner is.*

Ivy hath a kibe,<sup>2</sup> she caught it with the cold ;  
 So may they all have one, that with ivy hold.  
*Nay, ivy, nay, it shall not be, ywis,  
 Let holly have the mastery as the manner is.*

Holly hath berries as red as any rose,  
 The forester, the hunters keep them fro the does.  
*Nay, ivy, nay, it shall not be, ywis,  
 Let holly have the mastery as the manner is.*

<sup>1</sup> See note.

<sup>2</sup> Chilblain.

Ivy hath berries as black as any sloes,  
 Then comes the owl and eats them as she goes.  
*Nay, ivy, nay, it shall not be, ywis,*  
*Let holly have the mastery as the manner is.*

Holly hath birdës a full fair flock,  
 The nightingale, the popinjay, the gentle laverock.  
*Nay, ivy, nay, it shall not be, ywis,*  
*Let holly have the mastery as the manner is.*

Good ivy, what birdës hast thou?  
 None but the owlet that cries "How, how!"  
*Nay, ivy, nay, it shall not be, ywis,*  
*Let holly have the mastery as the manner is.*

*Nay, Nay, Ivy!*

Before 1536.

NAY, nay, Ivy!  
 It may not be, ywis,  
 For Holly must have the mastery  
 As the manner is.

Holly beareth berries,  
 Berries red enough;  
 The throstlecock, the popinjay  
 Dance in every bough.

Welaway, sorry Ivy!  
 What fowls hast thou  
 But the sorry owlet  
 That singeth "How, how!"?



Ivy beareth berries  
 As black as any sloe,  
 There cometh the wood culver,  
 And feedeth her of tho ;<sup>1</sup>

She lifteth up her tail  
 And she cakes ere she go ;  
 She would not for an hundred pound  
 Serve Holly so.

Holly with his merry men  
 They can dance in hall ;  
 Ivy and her gentle women  
 Cannot dance at all,

But like a meiny of bullocks  
 In a waterfall,  
 Or on a hot summer's day  
 When they be mad all.

Holly and his merry men  
 Sit in chairs of gold ;  
 Ivy and her gentle women  
 Sit without in fold,

With a pair of kibed<sup>2</sup>  
 Heels caught with cold ;  
 So would I that every man had  
 That with Ivy will hold !

<sup>1</sup> Them.

<sup>2</sup> With chilblains.

*The Holly and the Ivy*<sup>1</sup>

Traditional.

THE holly and the ivy  
 Now are both well grown ;  
 Of all the trees that are in the wood  
 The holly bears the crown.  
*The rising of the sun,*  
*The running of the deer,*  
*The playing of the merry organ,*  
*Sweet singing in the choir.*

The holly bears a blossom  
 As white as lily flower ;  
 And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ,  
 To be our sweet Saviour.  
*The rising of the sun,*  
*The running of the deer,*  
*The playing of the merry organ,*  
*Sweet singing in the choir.*

The holly bears a berry,  
 As red as any blood ;  
 And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ  
 To do poor sinners good.  
*The rising of the sun,*  
*The running of the deer,*  
*The playing of the merry organ,*  
*Sweet singing in the choir.*

<sup>1</sup> Printed in a broadside as early as 1710.

The holly bears a prickle  
As sharp as any thorn ;  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ  
On Christmas day in the morn.  
*The rising of the sun,*  
*The running of the deer,*  
*The playing of the merry organ,*  
*Sweet singing in the choir.*

The holly bears a bark  
As bitter as any gall ;  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ  
For to redeem us all.  
*The rising of the sun,*  
*The running of the deer,*  
*The playing of the merry organ,*  
*Sweet singing in the choir.*

The holly and the ivy  
Now are both well grown ;  
Of all the trees that are in the wood,  
The holly bears the crown.  
*The rising of the sun,*  
*The running of the deer,*  
*The playing of the merry organ,*  
*Sweet singing in the choir.*

## APPENDIX I

### CHRISTMAS HYMNS AND OTHER LYRICS

#### *For Christmas Day*<sup>1</sup>

1576.

Francis Kinwelmersh.

REJOICE, rejoice, with heart and voice !  
In Christës birth this day rejoice !  
From virgin's womb this day did spring  
The precious seed that only savèd man :  
This day let man rejoice and sweetly sing,  
Since on this day salvation first began.  
This day did Christ man's soul from death remove,  
With glorious saints to dwell in heaven above.

This day to man came pledge of perfect peace,  
This day to man came perfect unity,  
This day man's grief began to surcease,  
This day did man receive a remedy  
For each offence and every deadly sin  
With guilty heart that erst he wandered in.

In Christës flock let love be surely placed,  
From Christës flock let concord hate expel,  
Of Christës flock let love be so embraced  
As we in Christ and Christ in us may dwell ;  
Christ is the author of all unity,  
From whence proceedeth all felicity.

<sup>1</sup> *Paradise of Dainty Devices.*

*The Burning Babe*

1595.

Robert Southwell.

As I in hoary winter's night stood shivering in the snow,  
 Surprised I was with sudden heat which made my heart to  
 glow;

And lifting up a fearful eye to view what fire was near,  
 A pretty Babe all burning bright did in the air appear,

Who scorched with excessive heat such floods of tears did shed,  
 As though his floods should quench his flames which with  
 his tears were fed.

"Alas!" quoth he, "but newly born in fiery heats I fry,  
 Yet none approach to warm their hearts or feel my fire but I!

My faultless heart the furnace is, the fuel wounding thorns;  
 Love is the fire and sighs the smoke, the ashes shame and  
 scorns;

The fuel Justice layeth on, and Mercy blows the coals;  
 The metal in this furnace wrought are men's defiled souls;

For which, as now on fire I am, to work them to their  
 good,  
 So will I melt into a bath to wash them in my blood."

With that he vanished out of sight and swiftly shrunk away,  
 And straightway I called into mind that it was Christmas Day.

*New Prince, New Pomp*

1595.

Robert Southwell.

BEHOLD a silly tender Babe,  
In freezing winter night,  
In homely manger trembling lies ;  
Alas, a piteous sight.

The inns are full, no man will yield  
This little pilgrim bed ;  
But forced He is with silly beasts  
In crib to shroud His head.

Despise Him not for lying there,  
First what He is inquire ;  
An orient pearl is often found  
In depth of dirty mire.

Weigh not His crib, His wooden dish,  
Nor beast that by Him feed ;  
Weigh not His mother's poor attire,  
Nor Joseph's simple weed.

This stable is a Prince's court,  
This crib His chair of state ;  
The beasts are parcel of His pomp,  
The wooden dish His plate.

The persons in that poor attire  
His royal liveries wear ;  
The Prince Himself is come from heaven,  
This pomp is praisèd there,

With joy approach, O Christian wight !  
 Do homage to thy King ;  
 And highly praise this humble pomp  
 Which He from heaven doth bring.

*A Hymn on the Nativity of my Saviour*

1573 (?)—1637.

Ben Jonson.

I SING the birth was born to-night,  
 The Author both of life and light ;  
 The angels so did sound it.  
 And like the ravished shepherds said,  
 Who saw the light and were afraid,  
 Yet searched, and true they found it.  
 The Son of God, th' eternal King,  
 That did us all salvation bring,  
 And freed the soul from danger ;  
 He whom the whole world could not take,  
 The Word, which heaven and earth did make,  
 Was now laid in a manger.  
 The Father's wisdom willed it so,  
 The Son's obedience knew no No,  
 Both wills were in one stature ;  
 And as that wisdom had decreed,  
 The Word was now made flesh indeed,  
 And took on Him our nature.  
 What comfort by Him do we win,  
 Who made Himself the price of sin,  
 To make us heirs of glory !  
 To see this Babe all innocence ;  
 A Martyr born in our defence ;  
 Can man forget the story ?

*The Angels*

1585-1649.

William Drummond of Hawthornden.

RUN, shepherds, run where Bethlehem blest appears.  
 We bring the best of news; be not dismayed;  
 A Saviour there is born more old than years,  
 Amidst heaven's rolling height this earth who stayed.  
 In a poor cottage inned, a virgin maid  
 A weakling did Him bear, who all upbears;  
 There is He poorly swaddled, in manger laid,  
 To whom too narrow swaddlings are our spheres;  
 Run, shepherds, run and solemnise his birth.  
 This is that night—no, day grown great with bliss,  
 In which the power of Satan broken is:  
 In heaven be glory, peace unto the earth!  
 Thus singing, through the air the angels swam,  
 And cope of stars reëchoed the same.

*Who can Forget—Never to be Forgot*

1588-1623.

Giles Fletcher.

Who can forget—never to be forgot—  
 The time, that all the world in slumber lies,  
 When like the stars the singing angels shot  
 To earth, and heaven awakèd all his eyes,  
 To see another sun at midnight rise  
 On earth? Was ever sight of pareil fame  
 For God before, man like Himself did frame,  
 But God Himself now like a mortal was became.  
 A Child He was, and had not learnt to speak,  
 That with His word the world before did make.  
 His mother's arms Him bore, He was so weak,  
 That with one hand the vaults of heaven could shake.



See how small room my infant Lord doth take  
 Whom all the world is not enough to hold,  
 Who of His years, as of His age hath told ?  
 Never such age so young, never a child so old.

And yet but newly He was infanted,  
 And yet already He was sought to die ;  
 Yet scarcely born, already banish'd.  
 Not able yet to go, and forced to fly :  
 But scarcely fled away, when by and by,  
 The tyrant's<sup>1</sup> sword with blood is all defiled,  
 And Rachel, for her sons, with fury wild,  
 Cries, " O thou cruel king, and O my sweetest child ! "

Egypt His nurse became, where Nilus springs,  
 Who, straight to entertain the rising sun,  
 The hasty harvest in his bosom brings ;<sup>2</sup>  
 But now for drought the fields were all undone,  
 And now with waters all is overrun :  
 So fast the Cynthian mountains poured their snow,  
 When once they felt the sun so near them glow,  
 That Nilus Egypt lost, and to sea did grow.

The angels carolled loud their song of peace ;  
 The curs'd oracles were stricken dumb ;  
 To see their Shepherd the poor shepherds press ;  
 To see their kneeling the kingly sophies<sup>3</sup> come ;  
 And them to guide unto his Master's home,  
 A star comes dancing up the Orient,  
 That springs for joy over the strawy tent,  
 Where gold to make their prince a crown, they all present.

<sup>1</sup> Tyrant.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *The Carnal and the Crane*.

<sup>3</sup> Wise men.

*Christmas*<sup>1</sup>

1593-1633.

George Herbert.

ALL after pleasures as I rode one day,  
 My horse and I both tired, body and mind,  
 With full cry of affections quite astray,  
 I took up in the next inn I could find.

There, when I came, whom found I but my dear—  
 My dearest Lord ; expecting till the grief  
 Of pleasures brought me to Him, ready there  
 To be all passengers' most sweet relief ?

O Thou, whose glorious yet contracted light  
 Wrapt in night's mantle, stole into a manger ;  
 Since my dark soul and brutish is Thy right,  
 To man, of all beasts be not Thou a stranger ;

Furnish and deck my soul, that Thou mayst have  
 A better lodging than a rack or grave.

The shepherds sing ; and shall I silent be ?

My God, no hymn for Thee ?

My soul's a shepherd too ; a flock it feeds  
 Of thoughts and words and deeds.

The pasture is Thy word, the streams Thy grace,  
 Enriching every place.

Shepherd and flock shall sing, and all my powers  
 Outsing the daylight hours.

Then we will chide the sun for letting night

Take up his place and right :

We sing one common Lord ; wherefore He should  
 Himself the candle hold.

<sup>1</sup> *The Temple.*

I will go searching till I find a sun  
 Shall stay till we have done ;  
 A willing shiner, that shall shine as gladly  
 As frost-nipt suns look sadly.  
 Then we will sing and shine all our own day,  
 And one another pay.  
 His beams shall cheer my heart, and both so twine,  
 Till e'en his beams sing and my music shine.

*An Ode on the Birth of our Saviour*<sup>1</sup>

1647.

Robert Herrick.

IN numbers, and but these few,  
 I sing Thy birth, O Jesu !  
 Thou pretty baby, born here  
 With superabundant scorn here :  
 Who for Thy princely port here,  
     Hadst for Thy place  
     Of birth, a base  
 Outstable for Thy court here.

Instead of neat enclosures  
 Of interwoven osiers,  
 Instead of fragrant posies  
 Of daffodils and roses,  
 Thy cradle, Kingly Stranger,  
     As gospel tells,  
     Was nothing else  
 But here a homely manger.

But we with silks not crewels,  
 With sundry precious jewels,  
 And lily-work will dress Thee ;

<sup>1</sup> *Noble Numbers.*

And, as we dispossess Thee  
 Of clouts, we'll make a chamber,  
     Sweet babe, for Thee  
     Of ivory,  
 And plaster'd round with amber.

The Jews they did disdain Thee,  
 But we will entertain Thee  
 With glories to await here  
 Upon Thy princely state here ;  
 And, more for love than pity,  
     From year to year  
     We'll make Thee here  
 A free-born of our city.

*The Wassail*<sup>1</sup>

1648.

Robert Herrick

GIVE way, give way, ye gates, and win  
 An easy blessing to your bin  
 And basket by our entering in.

May both with manchet stand replete ;  
 Your larders too so hung with meat  
 That, though a thousand thousand eat,

Yet, ere twelve moons shall whirl about  
 Their silvery spheres, there's none may doubt  
 But more's sent in than was serv'd out.

Next may your dairies prosper so  
 As that your pans no ebb may know ;  
 But if they do, the more to flow,

<sup>1</sup> *Hesperides*.

Like to a solemn sober stream,  
 Bank'd all with lilies and the cream  
 Of sweetest cowslips filling them.

Then may your plants be pressed with fruit,  
 Nor bee or hive you have be mute,  
 But sweetly sounding like a lute.

Next may your ducks and teeming-hen  
 Both to the cock's tread say Amen,  
 And for their two eggs render ten.

Last may your harrows, shares and ploughs,  
 Your stacks, your stocks, your sweetest mows,  
 All prosper by your virgin vows.

Alas ! we bless, but see none here  
 That brings us either ale or beer :  
 In a dry house all things are near.

Let's leave a longer time to wait,  
 When rust and cobwebs bind the gate  
 And all live here with needy Fate.

Where chimneys do forever weep  
 For want of warmth, and stomachs keep  
 With noise the servants' eyes from sleep.

It is in vain to sing or stay  
 Our free feet here ; but we'll away :  
 Yet to the Lares this we'll say—

The time will come when you'll be sad  
 And reckon this for fortune had,  
 T'have lost the good ye might have had.

*The Shepherds*<sup>1</sup>

1650-1665.

Henry Vaughan.

SWEET, harmless livers! on whose holy leisure  
 Waits innocence and pleasure;  
 Whose leaders to those pastures and clear springs  
 Were patriarchs, saints and kings;  
 How happened it that in the dead of night  
 You only saw true light,  
 While Palestine was fast asleep and lay  
 Without one thought of day?  
 Was it because those first and blessed swains  
 Were pilgrims on those plains  
 When they received the promise, for which now  
 'Twas then first shown to you?

'Tis true He loves that dust whereon they go  
 That serve Him here below,  
 And therefore might for memory of those  
 His love there first disclose;  
 But wretched Salem, once His love, must now  
 No voice nor vision know;  
 Here stately piles with all their height and pride  
 Now languished and died,  
 And Bethlehem's humble cots above them stept  
 While all her seers slept;  
 Her cedar fir, hewed stones, and gold were all  
 Polluted through their fall;  
 And those once sacred mansions were now  
 Mere emptiness and show.

<sup>1</sup> *Silex Scintillans.*

This made the angel call at reeds and thatch,  
 Yet where the shepherds watch,  
 And God's own lodging, though He could not lack,  
 To be a common rack.  
 No costly pride, no soft-clothed luxury  
 In those thin cells could lie ;  
 Each stirring wind and storm blew through their cots,  
 Which never harboured plots ;  
 Only content and love and humble joys  
 Lived there without all noise ;  
 Perhaps some harmless cares for the next day  
 Did in their bosoms play,  
 As where to lead their ship,<sup>1</sup> what silent nook,  
 What springs or shades to look ;  
 But that was all ; and now with gladsome care  
 They for the town prepare ;  
 They leave their flock, and in a busy talk  
 All towards Bethlem walk,  
 To seek their soul's great Shepherd who was come  
 To bring all stragglers home ;  
 Where now they find Him out, and, taught before,  
 That Lamb of God adore,  
 That Lamb, whose days great kings and prophets wished  
 And longed to see, but missed.  
 The first light they beheld was bright and gay,  
 And turned their night to day ;  
 But to this later light they saw in Him  
 This day was dark and dim.

<sup>1</sup> Sheep.

*A Rocking Hymn*<sup>1</sup>

1588-1667.

George Wither.

SWEET baby, sleep ; what ails my dear ?  
 What ails my darling thus to cry ?  
 Be still, my child, and lend thine ear  
 To hear me sing thy lullaby.  
 My pretty lamb, forbear to weep ;  
 Be still, my dear ; sweet baby, sleep.

Thou blessed soul, what canst thou fear ?  
 What thing to thee can mischief do ?  
 Thy God is now thy father dear ;  
 His holy spouse thy mother too.  
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

Whilst thus thy lullaby I sing,  
 For thee great blessings ripening be ;  
 Thine eldest brother is a king,  
 And hath a kingdom bought for thee.  
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

Sweet baby, sleep, and nothing fear,  
 For whosoever thee offends,  
 By thy protector threatened are,  
 And God and angels are thy friends.  
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep,  
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

<sup>1</sup> *Hallelujah, or Britain's Sacred Remembrancer.*



When God with us was dwelling here,  
 In little babes he took delight :  
 Such innocents as then, my dear,  
 Are ever precious in his sight.  
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep,  
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

A little infant once was he,  
 And Strength-in-Weakness then was laid  
 Upon his virgin-mother's knee,  
 That power to thee might be conveyed.  
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

In this thy frailty and thy need  
 He friends and helpers doth prepare,  
 Which thee shall cherish, clothe and feed,  
 For of thy weal they tender are.  
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

The King of kings when he was born,  
 Had not so much for outward case ;  
 By him such dressings were not worn,  
 Nor suchlike swaddling-clothes as these.  
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

Within a manger lodged thy Lord,  
 Where oxen lay and asses fed ;  
 Warm rooms we do to thee afford,  
 An easy cradle or a bed.  
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

The wants that He did then sustain  
 Have purchased wealth, my babe, for thee,  
 And by His torments and His pain  
 Thy rest and ease secur'd be.  
 My baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

Thou hast (yet more), to perfect this,  
 A promise and an earnest got  
 Of gaining everlasting bliss,  
 Though thou, my babe, perceiv'st it not.  
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

*On the Infancy of our Saviour*<sup>1</sup>

1592-1644.

Francis Quarles,

HAIL, blessed virgin, full of heavenly grace,  
 Blest above all that sprang from human race ;  
 Whose heav'n-saluted womb brought forth in one,  
 A blessed Saviour and a blessed Son :  
 O ! what a ravishment 't had been to see  
 Thy little Saviour perking on thy knee !  
 To see Him nuzzle in thy virgin breast  
 His milk-white body all unclad, all undressed !  
 To see thy busy fingers clothe and wrap  
 His spraddling limbs in thy indulgent lap !  
 To see His desperate eyes, with childish grace,  
 Smiling upon His smiling mother's face !

<sup>1</sup> *Divine Fancies.*

And when His forward strength began to bloom,  
 To see Him diddle up and down the room !  
 O, who would think so sweet a Babe as this,  
 Should e'er be slain by a false-hearted kiss !  
 Had I a rag, if sure Thy body wore it,  
 Pardon, sweet Babe, I think I should adore it.  
 Till then, O grant this boon (a boon far dearer),  
 The weed not being, I may adore the wearer.

*Hymn for Christmas Day*<sup>1</sup>

BEING A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THREE SHEPHERDS

1613-1667.

Jeremy Taylor.

WHERE is this blessed Babe  
     That hath made  
 All the world so full of joy  
     And expectation ;  
     That glorious Boy  
     That crowns each nation  
 With a triumphant wreath of blessedness ?

Where should He be but in the throng,  
     And among  
 His angel ministers that sing  
     And take wing  
 Just as may echo to His voice,  
     And rejoice  
 When wing and tongue and all  
 May so procure their happiness ?

<sup>1</sup> *Festival Hymns.*

But He hath other waiters now :

A poor cow,  
An ox and mule, stand and behold,  
And wonder  
That a stable should enfold  
Him that can thunder.

*Chorus.* O what a gracious God have we,  
How good ! how great ! even as our misery.

*A Hymn for Christmas Day*<sup>1</sup>

1613-1667.

Jeremy Taylor.

AWAKE, my soul, and come away :  
Put on thy best array ;  
Lest if thou longer stay  
Thou lose some minutes of so blest a day.  
Go run  
And bid good-morrow to the sun ;  
Welcome his safe return  
To Capricorn.

And that great morn  
Wherein a God was born,  
Whose story none can tell  
But He whose every word's a miracle.

To-day Almightyness grew weak.  
The Word itself was mute and could not speak.

That Jacob's star which made the sun  
To dazzle if he durst look on,  
Now mantled o'er in Bethlehem's night,  
Borrowed a star to show him light.

<sup>1</sup> *Festival Hymns.*

He that begirt each zone,  
 To whom both poles are one,  
 Who grasped the Zodiac in His hand  
 And made it move or stand,  
 Is now by nature man,  
 By stature but a span ;  
 Eternity is now grown short ;  
 A king is born without a court ;  
 The water thirsts ; the fountain's dry ;  
 And life, being born, made apt to die.

*Chorus.* Then let our praises emulate and vie  
 With His humility !  
 Since He's exiled from the skies  
 That we might rise—  
 From low estate of men  
 Let's sing Him up again !  
 Each man wind up his heart  
 To bear a part  
 In that angelic choir and show  
 His glory high as He was low.  
 Let's sing towards men goodwill and charity,  
 Peace upon earth, glory to God on high !  
 Hallelujah ! Hallelujah !

## APPENDIX II

### MODERN CAROLS IN THE MEDIEVAL MANNER

#### *Modryb Marya—Aunt Mary*

##### A CHRISTMAS CHANT

1838.

Robert Stephen Hawker.

Now, of all the trees by the king's highway,  
Which do you love the best ?  
O! the one that is green upon Christmas Day,  
The bush with the bleeding breast.  
Now the holly with her drops of blood for me :  
For that is our dear Aunt Mary's tree.

Its leaves are sweet with our Saviour's Name,  
'Tis a plant that loves the poor :  
Summer and winter it shines the same  
Beside the cottage door.  
O! the holly with her drops of blood for me :  
For that is our kind Aunt Mary's tree.

'Tis a bush that the birds will never leave :  
They sing in it all day long ;  
But sweetest of all upon Christmas Eve  
Is to hear the robin's song.  
'Tis the merriest sound upon earth and sea :  
For it comes from our own Aunt Mary's tree.

So, of all that grow by the king's highway,  
 I love that tree the best ;  
 'Tis a bower for the birds upon Christmas Day,  
 The bush of the bleeding breast.  
 O! the holly with her drops of blood for me :  
 For that is our sweet Aunt Mary's tree.

*The Virgin's Cradle-Hymn*<sup>1</sup>

1817.

S. T. Coleridge.

DORMI, Jesu ! Matèr ridet  
 Quae tam dulcem somnum videt,  
 Dormi, Jesu ! blandule !  
 Si non dormis, Mater plorat,  
 Inter fila cantans orat,  
 Blande, veni, somnule.

*English*

Sleep, sweet babe ! my cares beguiling :  
 Mother sits beside thee smiling ;  
 Sleep, my darling, tenderly !  
 If thou sleep not, mother mourneth,  
 Singing as her wheel she turneth :  
 Come, soft slumber, balmily !

*Masters, in this Hall*

1860.

William Morris.

“ To Bethlem did they go, the shepherds three ;  
 To Bethlem did they go to see whe'r it were so or no,  
 Whether Christ were born or no  
 To set men free.”

<sup>1</sup> *Sibylline Leaves.*

Masters in this Hall,  
 Hear ye news to-day  
 Brought from over sea,  
 And ever I you pray.

## CHORUS.

Nowell ! Nowell ! Nowell !  
 Nowell sing we clear !  
 Holpen are all folk on earth,  
 Born is God's son so dear :  
 Nowell ! Nowell ! Nowell !  
 Nowell sing we loud !  
 God to-day hath poor folk rais'd,  
 And cast adown the proud.

Going over the hills,  
 Through the milk-white snow,  
 Heard I ewes bleat  
 While the wind did blow.  
*Chorus.*—Nowell, &c.

Shepherds many an one  
 Sat among the sheep,  
 No man spake more word  
 Than they had been asleep.  
*Chorus.*—Nowell, &c.

Quoth I, “ Fellows mine,  
 Why this guise sit ye ?  
 Making but dull cheer,  
 Shepherds though ye be ?  
*Chorus.*—Nowell, &c.



## MODERN CAROLS

“ Shepherds should of right  
 Leap and dance and sing,  
 Thus to see ye sit  
 Is a right strange thing.”  
*Chorus.*—Nowell, &c.

Quoth these fellows then,  
 “ To Bethlem town we go,  
 To see a Mighty LORD  
 Lie in manger low.”  
*Chorus.*—Nowell, &c.

“ How name ye this LORD,  
 Shepherds ? ” then said I,  
 “ Very God,” they said,  
 “ Come from Heaven high.”  
*Chorus.*—Nowell, &c.

Then to Bethlem town  
 We went two and two,  
 And in a sorry place  
 Heard the oxen low.  
*Chorus.*—Nowell, &c.

Therein did we see  
 A sweet and godly May,  
 And a fair old man,  
 Upon the straw She lay.  
*Chorus.*—Nowell, &c.

And a little CHILD  
 On Her arm had She ;  
 “ Wot ye Who This is ? ”  
 Said the hinds to me.  
*Chorus.*—Nowell, &c.

Ox and ass Him know,  
 Kneeling on their knee,  
 Wondrous joy had I  
 This little BABE to see.  
*Chorus.*—Nowell, &c.

This is CHRIST the LORD,  
 Masters be ye glad!  
 Christmas is come in,  
 And no folk should be sad.  
*Chorus.*—Nowell, &c.

*Outlanders, Whence Come ye Last?*<sup>1</sup>

William Morris.

OUTLANDERS, whence come ye last?  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the door.*  
 Through what green sea and great have ye passed?  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

From far away, O masters mine,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the door.*  
 We come to bear you goodly wine,  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

From far away we come to you,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the door.*  
 To tell of great tidings strange and true.  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

<sup>1</sup> *The Earthly Paradise*, printed here by kind permission of William Morris's trustees and of Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co.

News, news of the Trinity,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the door.*  
 And Mary and Joseph from over the sea !  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

For as we wandered far and wide,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the door*  
 What hap do ye deem there should us betide !  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

Under a bent when the night was deep,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the door.*  
 There lay three shepherds tending their sheep.  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

“ O ye shepherds, what have ye seen,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the door.*  
 To slay your sorrow and heal your teen ? ”  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

“ In an ox-stall this night we saw,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the door.*  
 A babe and a maid without a flaw.  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

“ There was an old man there beside,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the door.*  
 His hair was white and his hood was wide.  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

“ And as we gazed this thing upon,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the door.*  
 Those twain knelt down to the Little One.  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

“And a marvellous song we straight did hear,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the door.*  
 That slew our sorrow and healed our care.”  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

News of a fair and a marvellous thing,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the door.*  
 Nowell, nowell, nowell, we sing!  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

### *A Christmas Carol*<sup>1</sup>

Christina G. Rossetti.

IN the bleak mid-winter  
 Frosty wind made moan,  
 Earth stood hard as iron,  
 Water like a stone ;  
 Snow had fallen, snow on snow,  
 Snow on snow,  
 In the bleak mid-winter  
 Long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold Him,  
 Nor earth sustain ;  
 Heaven and earth shall flee away  
 When He comes to reign :  
 In the bleak mid-winter  
 A stable-place sufficed  
 The Lord God Almighty,  
 Jesus Christ.

<sup>1</sup> Printed here by kind permission of Messrs. Macmillan and Co.

Enough for Him whom cherubim  
Worship night and day,  
A breastful of milk  
And a mangerful of hay ;  
Enough for Him whom angels  
Fall down before,  
The ox and ass and camel  
Which adore.

Angels and archangels  
May have gathered there,  
Cherubim and seraphim  
Throng'd the air,  
But only His mother  
In her maiden bliss  
Worshipped the Beloved  
With a kiss.

What can I give Him,  
Poor as I am ?  
If I were a shepherd  
I would bring a lamb,  
If I were a wise man  
I would do my part,—  
Yet what I can I give Him,  
Give my heart.

*Three Damsels in the Queen's Chamber*<sup>1</sup>

1866.

A. C. Swinburne.

THREE damsels in the queen's chamber,  
 The queen's mouth was most fair ;  
 She spake a word of God's mother  
 As the combs went in her hair.  
 Mary that is of might,  
 Bring us to thy Son's sight.

They held the gold combs out from her,  
 A span's length off her head ;  
 She sang this song of God's mother  
 And of her bearing-bed.  
 Mary most full of grace,  
 Bring us to thy Son's face.

When she sat at Joseph's hand,  
 She looked against her side ;  
 And either way from the short silk band  
 Her girdle was all wried.  
 Mary that all good may,  
 Bring us to thy Son's way.

Mary had three women for her bed,  
 The twain were maidens clean ;  
 The first of them had white and red,  
 The third had riven green.  
 Mary that is so sweet,  
 Bring us to thy Son's feet.

<sup>1</sup> *Poems and Ballads. First Series.* Printed here by kind permission of Mr. Theodore Watts-Dunton.

She had three women for her hair,  
 Two were gloved soft and shod ;  
 The third had feet and fingers bare,  
 She was the likest God.  
 Mary that wieldeth land,  
 Bring us to thy Son's hand.

She had three women for her ease,  
 The twain were good women :  
 The first two were the two Maries,  
 The third was Magdalen.  
 Mary that perfect is,  
 Bring us to thy Son's kiss.

Joseph had three workmen in his stall,  
 To serve him well upon ;  
 The first of them were Peter and Paul,  
 The third of them was John.  
 Mary, God's handmaiden,  
 Bring us to thy Son's ken.

“ If your child be none other man's,  
 But if it be very mine,  
 The bedstead shall be gold two spans,  
 The bedfoot silver fine.”  
 Mary that made God mirth,  
 Bring us to thy Son's birth.

“ If the child be some other man's,  
 And if it be none of mine,  
 The manger shall be straw two spans,  
 Betwixen kine and kine.”  
 Mary that made sin cease,  
 Bring us to thy Son's peace

Christ was born upon this wise,  
 It fell on such a night,  
 Neither with sounds of psalteries,  
 Nor with fire for light.  
 Mary that is God's spouse,  
 Bring us to thy Son's house.

The star came out upon the east  
 With a great sound and sweet :  
 Kings gave gold to make him feast  
 And myrrh for him to eat.  
 Mary, of thy sweet mood,  
 Bring us to thy Son's good.

He had two handmaids at his head,  
 One handmaid at his feet ;  
 The twain of them were fair and red,  
 The third one was right sweet.  
 Mary that is most wise,  
 Bring us to thy Son's eyes. Amen.

### *A Christmas Lullaby*<sup>1</sup>

1840-93.

John Addington Symonds.

SLEEP, baby, sleep ! The Mother sings :  
 Heaven's angels kneel and fold their wings :  
 Sleep, baby, sleep !

With swathes of scented hay thy bed  
 By Mary's hand at eve was spread.  
 Sleep, baby, sleep !

<sup>1</sup> Printed here by kind permission of Mr. Horatio F. Brown.



At midnight came the shepherds, they  
Whom seraphs wakened by the way.  
Sleep, baby, sleep !

And three kings from the east afar  
Ere dawn came guided by thy star.  
Sleep, baby, sleep !

They brought thee gifts of gold and gems,  
Pure orient pearls, rich diadems.  
Sleep, baby, sleep !

But thou who liest slumbering there,  
Art King of kings, earth, ocean, air.  
Sleep, baby, sleep !

Sleep, baby, sleep ! The shepherds sing :  
Through heaven, through earth, hosannas ring.  
Sleep, baby, sleep !

## NOTES

P. 159. *Mirabile Misterium*. The title carol is written on a blank leaf of an imperfect tract printed by Wynkyn de Worde, and is singular in its personification of abstract qualities such as occur in the morality plays. The carols in this group show more orthodoxy and piety than originality or poetry. They are difficult to distinguish from other groups, because they usually include some details of the Nativity and frequently merge into the songs of Christmas joy.

P. 160. *Awdlay*, or Audelay. A blind and deaf monk, chaplain in Haughmond Abbey, Shropshire.

P. 164. *Blessed be the time*, &c. The logic is that Eve by her sin made redemption possible through Mary. Cf. the next three carols; also Part I. p. 30, *Ave fit ex Eva*.

P. 181. *Richard Smert*, or Smart. Various compositions in the Fairfax MS. are attributed to this man, who was said to be of Plymtree (Devonshire). He sometimes collaborated with John Trouluffe, or Truelove (cf. p. 183), but whether they were responsible for words as well as music is uncertain. The carols on pp. 181-183 show strong resemblances.

P. 186. *A blessed bird*, &c. The word *bird*, meaning son, young man, was in use chiefly between 1300 and 1571.

With the exception of the first line this carol has nothing to do with Christmas and might be included in Appendix II. The idea underlying the symbolism is of the Host.

P. 193. *Lully, lulley*, &c. This carol, of which the one following is a modern version, is interesting as showing the persistence of a lyric for four hundred years (the first version is probably of the fifteenth century, the second was taken from the recital of a boy who came with morris-dancers some years before 1862, cf. *Notes and Queries*, third series, ii. p. 103); and also because it

seems to have been suggested by some form of the legend of the Holy Grail. The Bleeding Knight is Christ, the "may" is His mother, the "falcon" is introduced apparently to suggest that the body of the poem is a vision. It is interesting to note that the modern version is the more specific of the two, adding the hound which licks the blood (the Church?) and the Holy Thorn of Glastonbury, which is intimately associated with the Grail story.

P. 195. *Remember, O Thou Man.* A didactic religious poem, included by John Wedderburn in his *Compendious Buik*, seems to be a parody of this, which is therefore probably older than 1567.

P. 201. *The Moon shone bright.* According to Husk this has the repute of having been sung by the bellman or watchman making his rounds. Its content certainly bears out this character; and although it contains much that is fairly modern, it may have developed from an earlier poem. Cf. Shakespeare, *As You Like It* (Act v. sc. 4), where in the poem "It was a lover and his lass," the lines—

"This carol they began that hour  
How that life was but a flower," &c.

may possibly be reminiscent of some version of this.

P. 203. *In Dulci Iubilo.* I have distinguished the few carols that dwell upon the more spiritual side of Christmas joy from those in which the enjoyment of material things is emphasized.

P. 209. *All the merrier, &c.* The symbolism of the "sun of grace" is carried through the chief divisions of the day—prime, noon and undern.

P. 209. *Him shineth.* *Him* seems to refer to Christ, although this interpretation is not without difficulties. The verb is *schynit*, which should be properly *shineth*; but the other verbs are all in the past tense.

P. 217. *Carols of Festivity.* This heading includes several carols of welcome and general good cheer, special carols that herald the bringing in of the boar's head, wassail songs, and the decoration of the hall with ivy and holly. The religious element is touched upon but lightly, and the atmosphere is of pagan revelry, particularly noticeable in the examples belonging to the seventeenth century.

P. 217. *Proface.* These carols usually suggest the background

of lavish hospitality, sometimes from the point of view of the givers, again of the seekers.

P. 243. *Wassail*. The oldest carol known (cf. Appendix I. p. 132), although Anglo-Norman, embodies the Saxon phrases used in pledging. The former of these has survived in the refrain of the initial carol of this group, which is otherwise highly religious. In the seventeenth century the wassail was a definite institution—the carrying about of a bowl of spiced ale from house to house to drink healths in expectation of a contribution. Nowadays the utterance of a “Merry Christmas” is often judged sufficient for the tip. Some of the poems here included are mere drinking-songs, but they were probably sung as carols at Christmas.

P. 245. *Bring us in good ale, &c.* In the MS. this song is preceded by the carol beginning,

“Nowell, nowell, nowell,  
This is the salutation of the angel Gabriel”

(cf. Part I. p. 35) and the note: “This is the tune for the song following; if so be that ye will have another tune, it may be at your pleasure, for I have set all the song.”

P. 255. *As I sat under a sycamore tree*. This carol, with its variant *As I sat on a sunny bank*, is still popular in various parts of England. Another version, minus the wassail element, is given on p. 213. The conception of Mary and Christ as sailing in a ship is very old; I have seen it in a stone carving taken from a chimney-piece of about the year 1500.

P. 256. *Caput Apri Defero*. The boar’s-head carols are interesting as embodying a ceremony surviving from a pagan sacrificial feast. Numerous as are the versions, their general effect is strikingly similar. Two give an account of the killing of the beast, and one drags in Christian symbolism by comparing him to Christ.

P. 258. *The second course*. All these things are mentioned in cookery books and directions for carving between the days of Henry IV. and James I. Some of them, as bruet of Allmayne and frumenty, were especially associated with Christmas cheer.

P. 262. *Veni coronaberis*. The holly and ivy carols exist in various forms and in many MSS. The singing of them seems to be a survival of some sort of Nature-worship. The two plants most characteristic of the season of the year seem to have been impersonated—holly by young men, ivy by maidens; and the poems are regularly in

the form of a debate or contention as to the respective merits of each. Perhaps in the decoration of the hall the work was so apportioned, and possibly there was earlier some sort of rude drama or dance connected with the ceremony. In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1779, p. 137, is mentioned a Shrovetide custom in East Kent which illustrates this old contention. The girls of a village burn a "Holly Boy" stolen from the boys; and the boys an "Ivy Girl" stolen from the girls, each in different parts of the village. The root idea seems to be whether the master or the mistress shall rule the household. Sandys in his *Christmas Carols* (1833, p. cxxii) tells a story that likewise associates this idea with Christmas. An old knight, while his guests were at table, asked that a carol be sung by the men who ruled their wives, and there was but a feeble response; but when he called upon the women who ruled their husbands, they fell all to such a singing that there was never heard such a caterwauling piece of music.

## GLOSSARY

Adesto nunc propicius.	Be now propitious.
Agnoscat omne seculum.	Let all the world acknowledge Thee.
Alleluia.	Hallelujah.
Alma Redemptoris mater.	Dear mother of the Redeemer.
Alma beata Trinitas.	Dear blessed Trinity.
Amice Christi, Johannes.	John, Christ's friend.
A Patre Unigenitus.	The only Son of the Father.
Armati sunt perimentes.	The armed men are slaying.
A solis ortus cardine.	Arisen from the quarter of the sun.
Atque semper virgo.	And virgin ever.
Aurora lucis rutilat.	The dawn of light reddens.
Aurum, tus, myrram offerent.	They shall offer gold, frankin- cense and myrrh.
Ave Maria.	Hail, Mary!
Ave maris stella.	Hail, star of the sea.
Benedicamus Domino.	Let us bless the Lord.
Bevvex bien par tutte la company.	Drink well, all the company.
Bona natalicia.	Happy birthday feast.
Bona voluntaria.	Blessed offering.
Caput apri defero.	I bring the boar's head.
Celis tesaurizare.	To heap up treasures in the heavens.
Christe, Redemptor omnium.	Christ, the Redeemer of all.
Christo parems canticam, ex- celsis gloria.	Let us prepare a song to Christ, glory on high.

Christus natus est.  
 Circumfultus undique.  
 Claro David germine.  
 Conditor alme siderum.  
 Circumfuso sanguine.  
 Congaudere mihi.  
 Consolamini.  
 Consorts Paterni luminis.

Constanter.  
 Contra regis consilia.  
 Corpus Christi.  
 Cum magna injuria.  
 Cum pudoris lilio.  
 Cum sua malicia  
 Cum sua potencia.  
 Cum venerit judicare.  
 Cunctis reparatrix.

De fructu ventris.  
 Dei mater alma.  
 Demonis potencia.  
 Deo gracias.  
 Deo Patri sit gloria.  
 De te, genetrice.  
 Deus homo natus est.  
 De virgine Maria.  
 De virgine purica.  
 Dicam vobis quia.  
 Dieus wous garde, bewe sieurs.  
 Digno Tu (Te?) scandente.  
 Dolore.  
 Dono cœlestis gratiæ.

Ecce ancilla Domini.  
 Ecce sum humilima ancilla  
 Domini.  
 Ego dixi.  
 Eia, Iesus hodie.  
 Eia, martyr Stephane.

Christ is born.  
 Shone upon from all sides.  
 Of the illustrious race of David.  
 O blessed Founder of the stars.  
 With the shedding of blood.  
 To rejoice with me.  
 Ye are consoled.  
 Consort of the light of the  
 Father.  
 Steadfastly.  
 Contrary to the king's counsels.  
 The Body of Christ.  
 With great injury.  
 With the lily of chastity.  
 With their wickedness.  
 With his power.  
 When He shall come to judge.  
 Renewer (fem.) of all things.

Of the fruit of the womb.  
 Gentle mother of God.  
 By the power of the devil.  
 Thanks to God.  
 Glory be to God the Father.  
 Of thee, His mother.  
 God is born man.  
 Of the virgin Mary.  
 Of a virgin most pure.  
 I shall tell you wherefore.  
 God keep you, gentlemen.  
 Thou fitly ascending.  
 With sorrow.  
 With the gift of heavenly grace.

Lo, the handmaid of the Lord.  
 I am the most humble handmaid  
 of the Lord.  
 I have said.  
 Lo, Jesus to-day.  
 Lo, Stephen the martyr.



Enixa est puerpera.	The woman in childbed is delivered.
Et dixit: "Maria ne timeas,"	And said: "Mary, fear not."
Eterna Lux credencium.	Eternal Light of believers
Eterne Rex altissime.	O eternal King on high.
Et Princeps gloriæ.	And Prince of glory.
Eva peccatrice.	By sinful Eve.
Exortum est.	He arose ( <i>lit.</i> it has arisen).
Exultet celum laudibus.	Let heaven rejoice with praises.
Felix celi porta.	Blessed gate of heaven.
Felix fecundata.	Blessed in thy fertility.
Ferens mortis tedia.	Bearing the burden of death.
Ferventes insania.	Raging in their madness.
Fervore.	With raging.
Fervore gentis impia.	By the rage of a wicked race.
Fraudenter.	Deceitfully.
Fulget Resurreccio.	The Resurrection shineth.
Gabriele nuncio.	From Gabriel the messenger.
Gaudeamus.	Let us rejoice.
Gentibus in Judæa.	Among the tribes in Judea.
Gloria in excelsis (Deo).	Glory on high (to God).
Gloria Tibi.	Glory to Thee.
Gloria Tibi, Domine.	Glory to Thee, O Lord.
Gracia Divina.	By Divine grace.
Hic erit Altissimi Filius.	He shall be the Son of the Most High.
Hostis Herodes impie.	O Herod, impious foe.
Iam lucis orto sidere.	Now the star of light having risen.
Iam ortus solis cardine.	Now arisen from the quarter of the sun.
Illaque favente.	By her favour.
In celi palacio.	In the palace of heaven.
In die Nativitatis.	On the day of the Nativity.
In die novissima.	On the last day.
In dulci iubilo.	In a sweet song of joy.
In excelsis gloria.	Glory on high.



Infans quem lactasti.

Infantis.

Infantum festa colentes.

Innixum Patris dextere.

In praesepio.

In quo Christus natus est.

In quo Salvator natus est.

In Regis curia.

In reginensi atrio.

In sua malicia.

Jesu, Fili Dei.

Jesu, Fili virginis.

Jesu, Salvator seculi.

Jesum semper amare.

Johannes, Christi care.

Kirieleyson.

Lapidaverunt Stephanum.

Laudamus Te Dominum.

Laus Tibi.

Laus Tibi sit gloria.

Letare.

Luto gratulante.

Lux fulgebit.

Malorum.

Mane nobiscum, Domine.

Maria, ne timeas.

Marya ventre concepit.

Mater dulcissima baba.

Mater gratiosa.

Mater honorata.

Mater salutaris.

Matris in gremio.

Michi plausus oscula dada.

Mira plenitudine.

Mirabile misterium.

The Child whom thou hast suckled.

Of the Child.

Keeping the feast of the Children.

Set on the right hand of the Father.

In the manger.

On which Christ was born.

On which the Saviour was born.

In the king's palace.

In the royal hall.

In their malice.

Jesus, Son of God.

Jesus, Son of the virgin.

Jesus, Saviour of the world.

To love Jesus always.

John, Christ's beloved.

Lord, have pity.

They stoned Stephen.

We praise Thee as Lord.

Praise to Thee.

Praise be to Thee (and) glory.

Rejoice.

Delighting in filth.

The Light shall shine.

Of the wicked.

Abide with us, O Lord.

Mary, fear not.

Mary conceived in her womb.

The sweetest mother kisses (?)

Gracious mother.

Revered mother.

Healing mother.

In His mother's lap.

Clapping hands, give me kisses(?)

In marvellous abundance.

Wonderful mystery.

- Miranda res.**  
 Miserere me (nobis).  
 Misterium mirabile.  
 Motu fertur proprio.  
 Munera portantes.  
 Wonderful thing.  
 Have mercy on me (us).  
 Wonderful mystery.  
 He is borne by His own motion.  
 Bringing gifts.
- Natus est de virgine.**  
 Nec dare.  
 Ne mentem sompnus opprimat.  
 Nobis preparavit.  
 Nomen Maria virginis.  
 Non ex virili semine.  
 Non poterit alligare.  
 Nova cantica.  
 Nova, nova : Ave fit ex Eva.  
 He was born of a virgin.  
 Nor give.  
 Let not sleep oppress the mind.  
 He has prepared for us.  
 The name of the virgin (is) Mary.  
 Not of man's seed.  
 He will not be able to bind.  
 New songs.  
 Tidings, tidings : Out of *Eva* is made *Avé*.
- Novus sol de virgine.**  
 Nowell.  
 A new sun of a virgin.  
 Christmas. In Middle English often *tidings* as if from French *nouvelles* ; but really from Latin *natalem* = *birth-day*.
- Nullus memoravit.**  
 Nunc gaudet ecclesia.  
 Nunc gaudet Maria.  
 None has told.  
 Now the Church rejoices.  
 Now Mary rejoices.
- O facies plena gracie.**  
**O flos de Jesse virgula.**  
**O Jesu parvule.**  
**O lux beata Trinitas.**  
**O martyr invictissime.**  
**Omnes de Saba venient.**  
**Omnes gentes plaudite.**  
**Omnia fecisti.**  
**Optans celi gaudia.**  
**O Puer optime.**  
 O countenance full of grace.  
 O Flower of the branch of Jesse.  
 O little Jesus.  
 O blessed light of the Trinity.  
 O martyr most unconquered.  
 All shall come from Sheba.  
 All ye nations, rejoice.  
 Ye have done all things.  
 Hoping for the joys of heaven.  
 O best of children.
- Par amour.**  
**Parens et puella.**  
**Pares forma.**  
**Pergens ad celestia.**  
 For love's sake.  
 Mother and maiden.  
 Equal in form.  
 Attaining to heaven.

- Per regis imperia.  
 Poscente.  
 Potencia demonis.  
 Potente.  
 Precantis.  
 Proface.  
 Pro peccante homine.  
 Prophetarum carmine.  
  
 Pro sua superbia.  
 Protomartyr Stephane.  
 Psallite gaudentes.  
 Puer natus.  
 Puer natus est nobis (nobis natus est).  
  
 Que vocatur Maria.  
 Quia lapidaverunt Stephanum.  
 Quia missus est angelus Gabriel.  
  
 Quia Salvator mundi natus est.  
  
 Quia tecum est Dominus.  
 Quia virum non cognosco.  
 Qui creavit omnia.  
 Quid petis, O Fili?  
 Qui estis in convivio.  
 Qui hodie natus es nobis.  
 Qui natus est (es—second person) de virgine.  
 Qui regnat super ethera.  
 Qui triumphavit hodie.  
 Quod Puer natus est nobis.  
 Quot estis in convivio.  
  
 Reddens laudes Domino.  
 Redemptoris mater.  
 Regem natum venerantes.  
  
 Reges de Saba venient.  
 Regina celi, letare.  
  
 Through the king's realms.  
 Entreating (it).  
 By the devil's power.  
 O powerful One.  
 Praying.  
 Welcome.  
 For sinful man.  
 By the word (*lit.* song) of the prophets.  
 For his pride.  
 O Stephen, first of the martyrs.  
 Sing rejoicing.  
 A Son is born.  
 Unto us a Son is born.  
  
 Who is called Mary.  
 Because they stoned Stephen.  
 Because the angel Gabriel is sent.  
 Because the Saviour of the world is born.  
 Because the Lord is with thee.  
 Because I know not a man.  
 Who created all things.  
 What seekest Thou, O my Son?  
 Ye who are at the feast.  
 Who is born to us on this day.  
 Who is born of a virgin.  
  
 Who reigns in heaven.  
 Who triumphed to-day.  
 Because a Child is born to us.  
 As many as are at this feast.  
  
 Giving thanks to the Lord.  
 Mother of the Redeemer.  
 Worshipping the King that is born.  
 Kings shall come from Sheba.  
 Queen of Heaven, rejoice.

Regnat Dei gracia.	The grace of God reigns.
Reluxit nobis hodie.	Has shone upon us to-day.
Repente.	Suddenly.
Res miranda.	Wonderful thing.
Rex pacificus.	The peacemaking King.
Rosa sine spina.	Rose without thorn.
Sacra fluenta potare.	To drink of the sacred fountains.
Salvator mundi, Domine.	Saviour of the world, Lord.
Salvator mundi natus est.	The Saviour of the world is born.
Salvatorem mundi.	Saviour of the world.
Salvator sine crimine.	The Saviour without sin.
Salve.	Hail.
Salve regina, mater misericordie.	Hail, queen, mother of pity.
Secreta que non noverat.	The secrets which she knew not.
Secundum verbum Tuum, fiat michi.	Let it be done to me according to Thy word.
Servire cantico.	To serve it with song.
Servite cum cantico.	Serve it with song.
Sicut voluisti.	As you have wished.
Sine contumelia.	Without disgrace.
Solamen miserorum.	Comfort of the wretched.
Sol de stella.	Sun of a star.
Spes eterne glorie.	Hope of eternal glory.
Stelle ducti lumine.	Guided by the light of the star.
Sua morte pia.	By His blessed death.
Sua morte propria.	By his own death.
Sua nocte pessima.	On his worst night.
Summi Largitor premii.	Dispenser of the supreme reward.
Summi Patris gracia.	By the grace of the Father Most High.
Tam gnare.	So wisely.
Te confitemur, Te eternum.	We acknowledge Thee as eternal.
Te Deum laudamus.	We praise Thee as God.
Te laudamus, Te Dominum.	We praise Thee as Lord.
Te Reformator sensuum.	Thee, renewer of the senses.
Teste propheta.	By the witness of the prophets.

Trahe me post Te.	Draw me after Thee.
Transeamus.	Let us follow.
Trinitatis unitas.	The Oneness of the Trinity.
Tutrix orphanorum.	The guardian (fem.) of orphans.
Tuum precor Filium.	I pray to Thy Son.
Ubi sunt gaudia.	Where joys are.
Ullo sine crimine.	Without any sin.
Ut castytatis lyllyum.	As the lily of chastity.
Ut nos purget a crimine.	That He may cleanse us from sin.
Ut nova.	Lo, news.
Ut supra.	As above.
Velut maris stella.	Like a star of the sea.
Veni coronaberis.	Come, you shall be crowned.
Veni, Creator Spiritus.	Come, Creative Spirit.
Veni, Redemptor (omnium) gencium.	Come, Redeemer of (all) mankind.
Venter puelle baiulat.	A maiden's womb bears.
Ventre quem portasti.	Whom thou didst bear in thy womb.
Ventus de terra orta est.	A wind has arisen from the earth.
Verbo concepit Filium.	She conceived a Son by the Word.
Verbo prophesy.	In the word of prophecy.
Verbum caro factum est.	The Word is made flesh.
Verbum Patris hodie processit ex virgine.	The Word of the Father proceedeth this day from a virgin.
Verbum superum prodiens.	Showing forth the high Word.
Vere consolatrix.	Truly a consoler (fem.).
Vere nuncuparis.	You shall be called truly.
Veritas de terra orta est.	Truth is arisen of the earth.
Victore triumphante.	Victor triumphing.
Virgo gloriosa.	Glorious virgin.
Virgo rosa virginum.	A maiden, the rose of maidens.
Viri sine semine.	Without seed of man.
Volente.	Willing.
Vox clara ecce intonat.	Lo, a clear voice sounds.

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